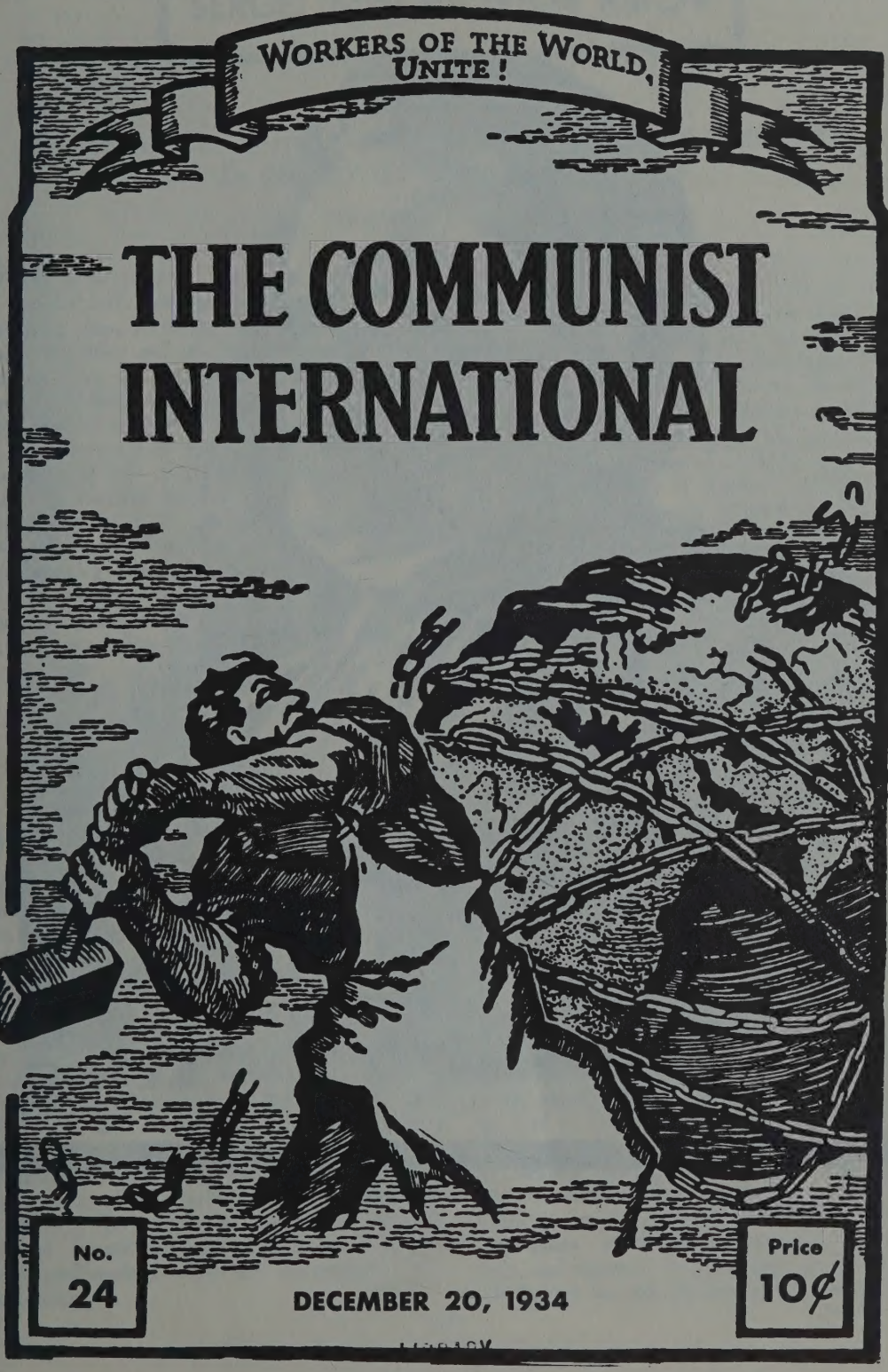
New Round of Revolutions and Wars
Problems of the United Front
Review of the "Party Organizer"



SERGEI MIRONOVICH KIROV

FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION (BOLSHEVIKS)

(Reprinted from *Pravda*)

WITH great sorrow, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks) informs the Party, the working class, all toilers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of the whole world that on December 1 in Leningrad a leader of our Party, the ardent, fearless revolutionary, the beloved leader of the Bolsheviks and of all the toilers of Leningrad, the Secretary of the Central and Leningrad Committees of the C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks), member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., Comrade Sergei Mironovich Kirov, fell by the treacherous hand of an enemy of the working class.

The loss of Comrade Kirov, beloved by the whole Party and by the entire working class of the U.S.S.R., a crystal-clear and unswervingly steadfast Party member, a Leninist Bolshevik who devoted the whole of his brilliant and glorious life to the cause of the working class, to the cause of Communism, is the most grievous loss suffered by the Party and the Land of the Soviets in recent years.

The Central Committee is sure that the memory of Comrade Kirov, the shining example of his fearless untiring struggle for the proletarian revolution, for the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R., will inspire millions of workers and toilers in the further struggle for the triumph of socialism, for the final extermination of all enemies of the working class.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION
(BOLSHEVIKS)

A MODEL BOLSHEVIK

(Reprinted from *Pravda*)

OUR Party has suffered a great loss. On December 1, Comrade Kirov was felled by the hand of a villainous assassin sent by our class enemies. Not only for us, his close friends and comrades, but for all who knew him through his revolutionary work, who knew him as a fighter, a comrade and a friend, the death of Kirov is an irreparable loss. The hand of the enemy has killed a man who devoted the whole of his brilliant life to the cause of the working class, to the cause of Communism, to the liberation of humanity.

Comrade Kirov was a model Bolshevik who knew neither fear nor obstacles in attaining the great aim set by the Party. His straight-forwardness, his iron determination, his splendid qualities as the inspired tribune of the revolution were combined with that sincerity and gentleness in personal comradeship and friendship, with that radiant personal warmth and modesty which are the attributes of a true Leninist.

Comrade Kirov worked in various parts of the Soviet Union, both during the underground period and after the October Revolution, in Tomsk and Astrakhan, in Vladikavkaz and Baku. Everywhere he held high the banner of our Party and rallied millions of toilers to its cause by his tireless, energetic, and productive work as a revolutionary.

For the last nine years Comrade Kirov led our Party organization in the City of Lenin and in the Leningrad Region. In a short farewell letter of grief it is impossible to give an appreciation of his work among the toilers of Leningrad. It would be hard to find in our Party as fitting a leader for the Leningrad working class, one equally capable of welding around the Party all Party members and the entire working class. Comrade Kirov imbued the entire Leningrad organization with that atmosphere of Bolshevik organization, discipline, love and devotion to the cause of the revolution which were his own distinguishing attributes.

You were dear to all of us, Comrade Kirov, as loyal friend, beloved comrade, dependable companion-in-arms. To the last of our days and our struggle we shall remember you, dear friend, and will feel the weight of our loss. You were ever with us in the days of the hard-fought battles for the triumph of socialism in our country, you were ever with us in the years of vacillation and difficulties within our Party. With us you went through all the hardships of recent years, and we have lost you at the moment when our country has scored great victories. In all this struggle, in all our achievements, much was due to you, to your energy, strength and fervent love for the cause of Communism.

Farewell, our dear friend and comrade, Sergei!

J. Stalin
S. Orjonikidze
V. Molotov
M. Kalinin
K. Voroshilov
L. Kaganovich
A. Mikoyan
A. Andreyev
V. Chubar
V. Kuibyshev
Y. Rudzutak
S. Kossior
P. Postyshev
G. Petrovsky
E. Enukidze
M. Shkiryatov
E. Yaroslavsky
N. Ezhov
A. Zhdanov

TO THE CENTRAL AND LENINGRAD REGIONAL AND CITY COMMITTEES OF THE C.P.S.U.

THE Executive Committee of the Communist International, together with the proletarians, collective farmers and all toilers of the U.S.S.R., together with the proletarians of the entire world, grieves for the death of Comrade Sergei Mironovich Kirov, one of the best leaders of the C.P.S.U. and a companion-in-arms of Lenin and Stalin, who has fallen by the hand of a foul agent of the enemies of the proletarian dictatorship.

The example of Comrade Kirov's life, the life of a noble unbending proletarian revolutionary internationalist, a great tribune of the proletariat, will inspire millions of toilers and oppressed throughout the world to the struggle against fascism, reaction and imperialist war, for the banner of the Communist International.

Executive Committee of the
Communist International

FROM SHAKEN STABILIZATION TO THE SECOND ROUND OF REVOLUTIONS AND WARS

I.

SIX years separate us from the Sixth Congress of the Comintern. During these six years, the world has changed its face, the changes taking the *direction* which was foretold by the Sixth Congress.

The Sixth Congress was convened in 1928, when the Social-Democratic Parties and the reformist trade unions were becoming increasingly fused with the State apparatus and the employers' organizations, when "Social-Democracy was passing from the shame-faced defense of capitalism to its open support" (Theses of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern), when Social-Democracy, carrying with it the majority of the working class, was still widening its influence everywhere and when the leading Social-Democratic Party—the German Party—was still in the government.

Under these conditions, Social-Democracy prophesied long years of prosperity for capitalism and preached "industrial peace", "economic democracy" and "organized capitalism" as the path to the "peaceful growth of democracy into socialism".

The prognosis and the line given by the Comintern were directly opposite to this. A year before the Sixth Congress, at the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., Comrade Stalin stated that:

> ". . . from stabilization itself, from the fact that output is increasing, that commerce is growing, from the fact that technical progress is going ahead and productive possibilities are rising, while the world market, and the limits of this market and the spheres of influence of various imperialist groups remain more or less stable, it is precisely from this that the most profound, the most acute crisis of world capitalism will arise, pregnant with new wars and threatening the existence of any stabilization."

And, noting that the third period had begun, and in characterizing this period, the Sixth Congress of the Comintern indicated the prospect of the breakdown of capitalist stabilization, the prospect of a revolutionary upsurge, and a "new period of imperialist wars and wars against the U.S.S.R., and of national emancipation wars against imperialism, and gigantic class battles".

History has utterly shattered the hopes and prophecies of the Social-Democrats and has completely confirmed the prognosis made by the Comintern.

Since the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, the basic contradiction of the present day, the contradiction between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist world, has tremendously sharpened. During the past six years the U.S.S.R. has achieved victories of world historic importance.

At the same time, during the past six years, the capitalist countries have displayed to the world a picture of increasing decline, of the collapse of capitalist economy and of the destruction of the very pillars of capitalism. An economic crisis broke out on a scale and of an intensity hitherto unknown in the world. In 1932 the decline of capitalist industry reached its lowest point, after which a certain extension of production began. But this extension of production meant a "peculiar kind of depression", which will not lead to a new upsurge and boom in industry, although it will not bring industry back to the lowest point reached by the decline. It was brought about by means of the plunder of the "workers, farmers, and the peasantry in the colonies and the economically weak countries" (Stalin).

The *basic* feature characterizing the dynamics of development in the period since the Sixth Congress of the Comintern is the collapse of capitalist stabilization, the maturing of the *revolutionary* crisis, though this has taken place unevenly in the various countries and has not proceeded along a uniform line in each country. Along with the growth of the revolutionary crisis and in close connection with it, and also as the reply of the bourgeoisie to this, there has arisen a new wave of fascism, while the war danger has grown far more intense.

* * *

At the Seventh Congress of the Comintern we shall have to give a clear reply to the questions of *the revolutionary upsurge, the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis, the conditions under which it is maturing, the weakest links in the imperialist chain, and the prospects of revolution, in order to determine what must be the basic objective* and what are the tactical tasks facing the Comintern in the near future, of which we shall speak below.

Even before the February events in France and Austria, and the recent events in Spain, the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. was able to note that "the world revolutionary crisis is maturing", and that "at any moment a change may come which will mean the conversion of the economic crisis into a revolutionary crisis"; while Comrade Stalin, when characterizing the present situation at the Seventeenth Party Congress, had every reason for stating that "the idea of storming capitalism is maturing in the

minds of the masses", that "the revolutionary crisis is maturing and will continue to do so", and that "the revolutionary crisis will grow all the more rapidly in proportion as the bourgeoisie becomes more involved in their warlike combinations, and as they more frequently resort to terrorist methods of struggle against the working class and the toiling peasants".

Why do we speak of the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis, in spite of the uneven nature and lack of directness of the development of the revolution? We do so for the following reasons:

1. "The pecular kind of depression" which began in 1933 does not open up prospects of an industrial boom, and still less does it open up the prospects of the stabilization of capitalism. The transition to a depression has not only failed to bring about a new boom, but "the improvement in the economic situation in the decisive capitalist countries — U.S.A., Germany and Britain—came to an end again at the beginning of the summer of 1934 and a new decline has begun" (M. Varga, *Wirtschaft und Wirtschaftspolitik in Zweiten Viertel Jahr* 1934). Of much greater importance than these variations in the economic situation, which were not equal in the various countries, is the fact that the conditions of the working class and the peasantry are growing worse in all the capitalist countries, and that the elements and symptoms of the disintegration of the system and the undermining of the foundations of capitalism are becoming more evident (the decline of the international financial and credit system, the continuation of the devaluation of currency, the non-fulfillment of international obligations, the continued absence of the export of capital, etc.). No prospects are visible of capitalism becoming stabilized in view of the impoverishment of the broad masses in the capitalist and colonial countries, in view of the tempestuous socialist growth in the U.S.S.R., and of the revolutionary upsurge in capitalist countries and the further intensification of international contradictons.

2. The passage to a "depression of a special kind" has not only failed to weaken the class struggle, but, as experience shows, this struggle has become still more intense.

3. The bourgeoisie are feverishly preparing for imperialist war and primarily for a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union. But the sympathy of the broad masses towards the Soviet Union is growing day by day. Therefore, the preparations for war against the U.S.S.R. hasten the maturing of the revolutionary crisis, and when war breaks out, then if our Parties carry on genuine Bolshevik work, it will inevitably grow into civil war.

4. The ever-spreading wave of reaction, fascist violence and fascist terror not only hinders but also hastens revolutionary development, gives rise to indignation among the masses, and encourages the idea of the need for storming capitalism.

5. Social-Democracy, as the main social buttress of the bourgeoisie in the industrial countries, is now passing through an ideological and organizational crisis which will become increasingly profound, and, if we carry through a correct policy, will facilitate the passage of the Social-Democratic workers to the side of Communism. And, finally,

6. This reason is of tremendous and first rate importance. During the first Five-Year Plan the Soviet Union secured a victory of world historic importance, and in the Second Five-Year Plan it is successfully solving and will finally solve the food question, the question of supplies for the toiling masses, and will thus beat the last trump card out of the hands of the bourgeoisie in their anti-Soviet propaganda, by proving even to the most backward strata of the workers that the only path of salvation for them is the path of the October Revolution.

The fact that the world revolutionary crisis is maturing is shown by the events that have taken place in recent years.

Firstly, revolutionary struggles have been going on for years in two countries.

In Soviet China, the victorious revolution, as personified by the heroic Chinese Red Army, has beaten back five drives undertaken by the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang, and finally defeated the more thoroughly prepared sixth campaign, and by maneuvering has preserved its forces, and, while retreating in some districts, is victoriously occupying others. The Soviet revolution in China has had and continues to have an enormous influence on all the colonial countries in which great regroupings of class forces have taken place during the last six or seven years, in respect to the national bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

At the present day, not only in China where the leading role (hegemony) of the proletariat has already been put into operation under the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry in the form of Soviets, but also in Indo-China, India and a number of other countries, are the proletariat fighting with greater intensity and not without success, to win the hegemony in the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolutionary government, and in these countries are raising the banner of the Soviet revolution. The Soviet revolution in China is a big factor in the world revolution. The Chinese Soviets constitute an extremely dangerous revolutionary rear in respect to the military attack on the Soviet Union being prepared by Japanese imperialism.

In Spain, at the opposite extreme of the old world, we also see the advance of the revolution which throughout its course has raised point blank the question of power. The general strike in Spain, which began in reply to the threat of the seizure of

power by the fascists, developed into a mass armed rising in the industrial districts of the North. In Asturias and Biscay, Soviets came into being in Spain for the first time. Counter-revolution came out on top in this particular struggle, but the forces of the Spanish proletariat were not smashed. A re-grouping of forces is taking place in preparation for new decisive struggles. The revolution in Spain is accelerating the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis.

Secondly, it is extremely symptomatic that *revolutionary events are suddenly breaking out now here, now there, in all parts of the world,* including such "peaceful" countries as Holland, or Switzerland, and that in the industrial countries, not to speak of the colonies, we see that not only the workers but in some places the peasants also are taking action, while here and there vacillations are to be observed in the army.

During the last two years, after the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany, which the Social-Democrats imagined to be the beginning of a long era of political reaction among the masses, and after the transition to the "peculiar type of economic depression", which they imagined to be the beginning of an industrial boom, we have had the revolutionary upsurge which has burst out for the first time in Rumania (oil strike, general railway strike, accompanied by bloody fighting); in Poland there have been the general strike of the textile workers of Lodz, and a peasant revolt in Galicia; there have been the revolutionary events in Cuba; the victory of the heroic Red Army in China; the famous February battles in France in 1934 (enormous demonstrations, the general strike, and barricade fighting); there have been the still more vivid revolutionary events of the heroic armed struggle in Austria; the hunger march in England; the general strike in Greece; the revolutionary actions of the unemployed in Holland.

The most symptomatic feature is that the workers are now beginning to resort to arms.

In peaceful Switzerland our Party has been able to mobilize the broad masses against the fascization of the country. In a referendum vote, half a million workers and peasants rejected the "prison law" proposed by the bourgeoisie. On May 20, 1934, the Communist Party headed a demonstration of 10,000 workers in Zurich against fascist provocation, and barricade fighting followed.

During the first nine months of 1934, an enormous wave of strikes swept over the U.S.A., approaching in respect to the number of strikers involved (about 2,000,000) the famous strike wave in the U.S.A. in 1919, and in respect to its political level surpassing the 1919 movement, which marked the rise of the revolutionary upsurge in the U.S.A.

In Great Britain, a country which is backward in the revolutionary sense, the recent tremendous electoral victories of the Labor Party over the Conservatives have shown that the majority of the working class still cherish illusory hopes as to a third Labor government, but at the same time ever-growing strata of workers in that country are becoming radicalized, as shown by the increasing influence of the Communist Party. It was precisely this radicalization of the masses which impelled the Independent Labor Party to leave the Labor Party and enter into long-drawn-out negotiations with us on the united front. All this shows the maturing of the *world* revolutionary crisis, in spite of the great inequality of the process of revolutionary development.

Thirdly, the movement is now taking very acute forms. Economic strikes rapidly grow into political strikes and are accompanied by sympathetic strikes much more frequently than formerly. Political strikes frequently take place, not to speak of political demonstrations. If, on the eve of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., *i.e.,* shortly before the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany, there were in Czechoslovakia and Poland what Lenin called "revolutionary strikes", now on the other hand, such economic strikes, interwoven with political strikes or growing into them, have become a very widespread phenomenon. It is sufficient to mention the latest example of the U.S.A., where the strikes which began under the slogan of support for Roosevelt's "New Deal" (which professed to be so advantageous for the workers), very soon turned into a strike struggle against the N.R.A. codes, which took on an ever more militant political character, and assumed the form of sympathetic strikes, general strikes, etc.

Fourthly, an absolutely new factor is the general powerful urge of the Social-Democratic workers towards the united front of struggle jointly with the Communists, and in some places the passage not only of Social-Democratic workers but of entire Social-Democratic organizations into the camp of Communism.

The world revolutionary crisis is maturing, but the process of this maturing does not follow a uniform straight line, but goes on in zigzag fashion. Especially in those places where fascism has succeeded in seizing the power do we find the movement being temporarily held up. In Poland, on the eve of the fascist coup in Germany, the number of strikers was bigger than at any time during the previous five years, and in 80 cases out of 100 the strikes were led by Communists. Simultaneously a broad wave of the peasant movement arose in Poland, taking on the character of the beginning of an agrarian revolution. All this taken together enabled the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. at that time to have ample grounds for stating that "Poland is approaching closely to a revolutionary crisis".

In Czechoslovakia also tremendous economic bat-

tles took place at that time led by the Communists, *e.g.*, the general miners' strike in Northern Bohemia.

In Germany also, on the eve of the Twelfth Plenum, the class battles assumed extreme intensity though in other forms (the struggle against fascism), sometimes taking on the appearance of a minor civil war (Altona, Luebeck), while, immediately after the Twelfth Plenum, a big transport strike took place in Germany (in November 1932), as well as a large number of strikes in connection with the Papen decree to cut wages by 50 per cent. After the temporary defeat in Germany, after the establishment there of an open fascist dictatorship, and connected with this, we have a temporary weakening of the movement in Central Europe.

In Germany, under the Hitler regime, strikes have been and still are of extremely short duration and are almost always spontaneous in character. In Poland the strike wave has not fallen, but owing to the increase in the "Left" maneuvers of the P.P.S., the leadership of the strikes in many cases passed into the hands of the P.P.S. In Czechoslovakia also our independent leadership of economic struggles weakened owing to the fact that the Social-Democrats were able to take advantage of the fear of the masses of fascism to secure support for the Social-Democratic policy of the "lesser evil".

All this could not hold back the growth of the revolutionary crisis on a world scale, but in these countries the upsurge has come to a standstill for a time or has temporarily weakened (the curve of the movement there has now begun to rise again).

These victories achieved by fascism, and the temporary weakening of the movement in connection with them in some industrial countries in Central Europe, were prepared for and at the decisive moment were brought about in the main by the treachery of Social-Democracy. But a certain part of the responsibility for this—for the fact that we were unable to paralyze the treacherous attack of Social-Democracy—must be borne by us as well, by our Parties, through their lag behind, and their mistakes. The Comintern has repeatedly pointed out this lagging behind and these mistakes—for example, in connection with the fascist coup in Finland and recently in connection with the fascist coup d'etat in Bulgaria. In Germany, also, on the eve of the seizure of power by the fascists, at the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., the members of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, including the leader of the German Communist Party, Comrade Thaelmann, criticized the mistakes of the C.P.G. and its lagging behind.

The mistakes and lagging behind of the Party must now be submitted to the most thorough self-criticism. But we must not forget that, in spite of the zig-zags, the revolutionary movement is going ahead, along a rising curve, and that this is due not only to objective conditions but to a very considerable extent to our Parties and the Comintern. If international Social-Democracy is now undergoing a crisis, if the Social-Democratic Parties of Germany and Austria have been destroyed since the establishment of open fascist dictatorship in these countries, while our Parties, which are subjected to much more fierce terror, have remained at their posts, and in Austria our Party is growing rapidly, particularly at the present time, this is obviously the result of the good work of our Parties.

The process of the ripening of the revolutionary crisis is taking place *unevenly*. Now, after Hitler's victory, we have a period of calm in the mass movement in Germany, and at the same time we see a rise of the mass movement, varying in degree and form, in the strongest capitalist countries—France, Great Britain and the U.S.A. But when we speak of a lull in the mass movement in Germany, we must not forget that big mass strikes, and still more the general strike, would have an absolutely different nature and different results in fascist Germany than the mass strikes and general strikes which have taken place in France or the U.S.A. In Germany, the general strike, irrespective of its result, would signify the beginning of revolution. Therefore a far greater accumulation of forces, a much stronger accumulation of revolutionary indignation and revolutionary enthusiasm is necessary for a general strike to be able to break out in Germany, and when it breaks out it will take incomparably more tempestuous revolutionary forms.

These processes of discrediting the government and the accumulation of revolutionary forces are now taking place in Germany, and are being tremendously assisted by the bankruptcy of the demagogic economic promises made by Hitler. These processes will take place much more rapidly when we are able to bring about there frequent, rapidly alternating, even though small, strikes, and impromptu demonstrations in various places. These processes are even now being accelerated by the rise of the revolutionary movement in the neighboring "democratic" countries, not to speak of the tremendous influence of the victories of socialism in the U.S.S.R. We should not judge of the length of the path of Germany towards the revolution on the basis of the temporary lull there. This lull is a very deceptive one. It is the lull before the storm.

Such are the conditions of the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis. Such are the prospects of revolution.

* * *

But we are faced with still other prospects—the

prospects of war. However, revolution will inevitably grow out of war, and, moreover, in the present circumstances, the growth of war into revolution will take place much more rapidly than in the first round of wars and revolutions.

In the period of the partial stabilization of capitalism, "pacifism" prevailed; there was a certain equilibrium between the imperialist countries on the basis of agreements for the partition of the world after the war, and there was a "breathing space" in respect to the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist countries. After the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, the era of pacifism came to an end. Imperialist war is coming nearer, and still nearer is the counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R., a war of which the Japanese military clique and the German fascists have now been talking openly for a long time.

Very recently, a certain zig-zag can be seen in this sphere as well. The invitation of the U.S.S.R. into the League of Nations and its entrance into the League undoubtedly signify certain hindrances to the unleashing of war. But it would be a harmful and dangerous illusion to think that it is a *guarantee* against war and above all against an anti-Soviet war.

Firstly, it is by no means essential that a wide anti-Soviet bloc must be formed before an anti-Soviet war breaks out. The war instigators hope that when they face the other imperialists with an accomplished fact, the latter will change their position.

Secondly, the entire capitalist world is by no means pleased with the prospects of the successful completion of the Second Five-Year Plan in the Soviet Union.

Thirdly, the intensity of the imperialist contradictions shows the danger of imperialist war. Therefore, the prospects of imperialist war and above all of an anti-Soviet war are not removed, while the fact that these prospects are connected with the prospects of the victory of the revolution in a number of countries was explained with sufficient eloquence by Comrade Stalin at the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.

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Thus, *we are now at the eve of the second round of revolutions and wars.* One of the peculiar features of the situation where the second round of revolutions and wars is maturing is the fact that it is taking place now in conditions where fascism is growing and Social-Democracy is in a state of crisis.

The advent of fascism to power and the substitution of open fascist dictatorship in Germany, Austria and other countries, in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie concealed behind parliamentarism, represent a severe blow at the proletariat and its Communist vanguard. The fascist form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is the most savage and hateful form of this dictatorship. It is the dictatorship of the most terroristic, the most reactionary, the most chauvinistic, and the most imperialistic sections of finance capital, which grows under modern conditions out of the bourgeois dictatorship which is concealed behind parliamentarism.

But how and to what degree will the coming to power of the fascists affect the maturing of the revolutonary crisis? First of all, what is the meaning of the fact that the bourgeoisie are now everywhere *putting their stake on fascism?* The answer is—the growing danger of revolution, in face of which the bourgeoisie are no longer able to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy. *The fact that the bourgeoisie are staking their all testifies to the weakness of the bourgeoisie.* The fact that fascism has *been victorious* in a number of countries, that the bourgeoisie in some countries have been able to establish an open fascist dictatorship, is "not only a recognition of the weakness of the bourgeoisie but also a recognition of the weakness of the proletariat and a result of the treachery of Social-Democracy to the working class, which cleared the way to fascism" (Stalin).

But the fact that the bourgeoisie deliberately *took the line of fascism* is to be explained first and foremost by their weakness. They felt and still feel themselves forced to adopt this course, although they realize that it is fraught with the following dangers as far as they are concerned: First, when fascism destroys the parliamentary system and unleashes civil war, it unwillingly causes the proletariat to pass through a revolutionary schooling, and to outlive more speedily their democratic illusions, and to become trained for the violent overthrow of the bourgeois system. Second, fascism, which establishes itself a mass basis by means of social and nationalist demagogy among the ruined petty bourgeoisie and partly among the declassed workers and among those sections of the people who are filled with anti-capitalist sentiments, cannot help displaying its utter inability to fulfill these demagogic promises after it comes to power, and is already doing so, and this is bound to cause a revolt sooner or later among the deluded petty-bourgeois masses and declassed workers, *if there is a sufficiently strong Communist movement among the masses.* This is already taking place in Germany. Therefore, while the bourgeoisie are everywhere heading for fascism, and bringing the fascists to power, they realize that they are taking a big risk.

When the fascist dictatorship was established in Germany, Social-Democracy and the renegades from Communism, followed by certain unstable elements in the Communist Parties, advanced the thesis that a whole *historical epoch of fascism* had set in, in the sense that fascism will *inevitably* be victorious everywhere, that the resistance of the proletariat had been

smashed, and that there are no revolutionary prospects. The facts have shown that this capitulatory, fatalistic theory is doubly incorrect.

First, the very fact of the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany, and the frightful example of the Hitlerite terror, have caused great alarm among very large sections of the proletariat in various countries and have given an impulse to a tempestuous counter-offensive by the proletariat against fascism in their own countries. We need but recall the tremendous battles in February in France, the heroic armed struggle of the Austrian workers against fascism, the general strike and the armed rising of the Spanish workers in reply to the inclusion of the fascists in the government—battles in which no small role was played by the passionate desire of the French, Austrian and Spanish workers to avoid the fate of the proletariat in Germany.

Second, although the Hitlerite regime in Germany itself, with frantic terror and unbridled demagogy, set up great difficulties in the way of the development of the mass struggle of the proletariat, yet it was unable to smash the Communist movement—while Hitler's rule has already aroused certain resistance on the part of the workers, which found expression in the election of the factory representatives. The results of these elections have been qualified by the fascists themselves as "a blow in the face for the National Socialist outlook". Soon after this, a revolt began among the petty-bourgeois masses who had been deluded by fascism. Considerable unrest arose among the Storm Troops, who demanded that Hitler should carry out his demagogic promises, while the real masters of Germany, the Thyssens and Krupps, demanded a further capitalist offensive. This, and also to some extent the conflict between the Reichswehr and the Storm Troops officers, led to the bloody events of June 30 which, although they did not by far imply the collapse of German fascism (this collapse wil take place only under the blows of the proletariat), yet nevertheless implied the *beginning of the crisis of German fascism.*

German fascism strengthened the apparatus of the army and the State, and after June 30 reinforced it to a still greater degree; but at the same time it is more and more losing its mass basis. This is an excellent confirmation of the thesis of the Comintern that fascism not only strengthens but at the same time undermines the position of the bourgeoisie. It should not be forgotten that the present wave of fascism, as distinguished from that which took place on the eve and during the partial stabilization of capitalism, arose not as the result of the defeat of the proletariat, but owing to the deep pauperization of the middle classes, to the revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat and the fear of the bourgeoisie of the approaching revolution. It should also not be forgotten that industrial Germany is not Italy, that the German proletariat is much stronger than the Italian proletariat, and that the present German Communist Party is incomparably stronger in all respects than the Italian Party was at the time when Mussolini came to power.

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The process of the revolutionization of the masses, on the one hand, and the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany and Austria on the other hand, have led to the crisis of international Social-Democracy, while in Germany and Austria they have led to its collapse. *The chief social buttress of the bourgeoisie in the shape of international Social-Democracy has become far more rickety than at the time of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern.* This is confirmed by the words of Lenin, delivered at the Third Congress of the Comintern.

> "Petty-bourgeois democracy in capitalist countries, represented by the Second and 2½ Internationals in its advanced part, is the chief buttress of capitalism at the present moment, inasmuch as the majority of an important section of the industrial and commercial workers and employees are still under its influence and they fear in case of revolution to lose the middle-class state of comparative prosperity created by the privileges of imperialism. *But the increasing economic crisis is everywhere worsening the conditions of the broad masses, and this circumstance, together with the increasingly clearer inevitability of new imperialist wars while capitalism remains, makes this support ever less reliable.*" (Our italics—*Ed.*)

And now, Social-Democracy is still drawn by the bourgeoisie into participation in the government, here and there, and, as is shown by the recent elections in Great Britain, the U.S.A. and the Scandinavian countries, and also by the growth of the A. F. of L., its influence in some countries is still growing. But in general it is undergoing a deep *crisis.*

This crisis is expressed in the fact that in a number of countries, such as France, groups are splitting away from it, from the Right and Left. Those who split away from the Right have *openly* passed to the side of reaction and fascism (MacDonald in England, Renaudel-Mark in France). The Social-Democratic Parties in a number of countries have begun to use "Left" phrases on an unprecedented scale (cheap drivel about the "temporary dictatorship of the proletariat", the "dictatorship of the masses", etc.) and to resort to "Left" actions, which at first mainly had only the character of maneuvers (leading strikes in order either to break them or limit their extent, so as to keep the Leftward-moving masses under their influence, in order to prevent them from going over

to the camp of Communism). Then, under the increasing pressure of the masses, these actions have sometimes assumed the character of an actual struggle against fascism, against war, etc.

Some of the Social-Democratic Parties, under the pressure of their members and to some extent out of the fear of sharing the fate of the German Social-Democrats if fascism should be victorious in their country, have been inclined to form a united front with the Communists (France), though with all kinds of conditions and with hesitation.

In Spain, fear of the fascist coup which Robles was preparing, and the pressure of the revolutionary masses compelled even the "Left" majority of the Socialist Party, led by Largo Caballero, which had comparatively recently participated in the bourgeois government, to consent to the united front with the Communists in spite of the resistance of the Right Socialists, and to make technical preparations for armed action in defense of the Republic and, together with the Communists to participate in the armed struggle, which in Asturias and Biscay grew into a mass armed uprising under the leadership of the Communists. Among the Social-Democratic rank and file, there is everywhere an increasing feeling in favor of the united front with the Communists.

In Germany and Austria, only the former leaders, now in emigration, who to a certain extent constitute a staff without an army, have retained their old standpoint. The same is true of a small section of the activists connected with them, who work inside the respective countries in conformity with fascist savagery. There are strong relics of Social-Democracy in the minds of the numerous Social-Democratic workers who, having left their parties, are now absolutely passive in Germany and Austria, evidently in anticipation of fascism "falling by itself" and of a new "good" Social-Democracy appearing in place of the "bad" Social-Democracy which has become bankrupt before their very eyes. A certain section of the Social-Democratic workers who left their party have gone to the fascists. Some of the German emigrants of the "Left Wing" have taken note of the Leftward-moving process going on among the workers and are now trying to revive the Social-Democratic Party on the basis of a new eclectic "revolutionary-socialist" program. A process of differentiation has begun among the "Revolutionary Socialists" of Austria. Some of them have gone over to the Communists, while others have adopted a number of radical decisions at their conference but have at the same time decided to remain in the ranks of the Second International.

Considerable numbers of *active* Social-Democratic members, groups and organizations, which work illegally in these countries, have arrived at the cross-roads. A definite number of them show their leanings towards Communism and some have already come over to Communism. Under these conditions of the crisis of Social-Democracy, we cannot assert that every Social-Democrat making a step to the Left is only maneuvering. We must now make a distinction between the "Left" Social-Democrats in quotation marks and those who are genuinely Left.

We must not forget that in a number of countries which have taken the fascist road, it is no chance that the bourgeoisie, while bearing well in mind that the Social-Democratic theory and practice of the cooperation of the workers' party with the bourgeoisie had done them an irreplaceable service, yet on the ocher hand, has taken into account that the Social-Democratic organizations are workers' organizations as far as membership is concerned, as are all mass organizations not directly led by the fascists and that they are now becoming a menace to them, and therefore require to be done away with. We must therefore carry on such flexible tactics in accordance with these facts so that, while striking unceasing blows at Social-Democracy, and those who bear its outlook, we shall draw the Social-Democratic workers to our side.

II.

"The revolutionary crisis is maturing and will mature." But "the victory of the revolution will never take place by itself. It must be prepared and must be won. And it can only be prepared and won by a strong revolutionary proletarian party" (Stalin).

How do matters stand in respect to the existence of strong revolutionary proletarian parties? During the first round of wars and revolutions, the Sections of the Comintern, with the exception of the C.P.S.U., were not yet such parties, and the Comintern as a whole was only to a small degree a united world proletarian party of a new type. At that time, it was only such a party in embryo. After the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, in the period of 1928-30, it was already possible to register the consolidation of the majority of the Sections of the Comintern, and the conversion of the Comintern itself into a monolithic world proletarian party of a new type.

The results of the Bolshevization of our biggest Sections, their consolidation and the transformation of the Comintern into a really united world monolithic party, did not fail to make themselves felt. It was precisely after the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in 1929 that it was possible to register the rapid growth of the political influence of our Parties, as well as a number of big successes for the strongest of them, namely the German, Chinese, Polish and Czechoslovakian Parties, etc.

Did the consolidation of our Parties and of the Comintern as a whole safeguard us from lagging behind for the future? No. And right up to the present time we must admit that our Parties are lagging very much behind in the winning of the majority of the working class, in the strengthening of contacts with the masses, of selecting new revolutionary cadres closely connected with the masses, in penetrating into the big factories, into the reformist trade unions and the fascist mass organizations, in developing mass struggles under our leadership, and in winning allies for the proletariat. All this makes it essential for us to develop the widest *self-criticism*.

For the present time, the characteristic feature is the coming of sharp sudden changes. Such changes require changes of tactics. But in these unexpected changes and tactical alterations, vacillations are possible and even inevitable in various sections of the Parties or in entire Parties. The difference between the present situation and the former one, when our Parties were not yet consolidated, is merely that these vacillations and mistakes are now corrected and outlined more rapidly and do not give rise to Party crises, as was formerly the case.

At the present time there are big changes in the situation in connection with the establishment of an open fascist dictatorship in Germany and Austria, and the advance of fascism in other countries, in connection with the increased danger of war, in connection with the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis, in connection with the revolutionizing of the feelings of the broad proletarian masses, in connection with the profound crisis of Social-Democracy, in connection with the strong urge of the Social-Democratic masses towards the united front of struggle alongside the Communists.

All this requires of us that we advance the slogan of Soviet Power as our central political slogan, as was done by the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. At the same time all this requires of us that we change our methods of conducting the tactics of the united front to suit the new and changing situation. We change our tactics not because our former tactics were incorrect, as the Social-Democrats and the renegades from Communism are now trying to prove. In spite of isolated mistakes made in the localities, and sometimes by the Party leaders, our former tactics were correct. We are changing the tactics of the united front now because conditions have changed.

The nature of the change in the tactics of the united front was set out in the manifesto of the E.C.C.I. to the workers of all countries on March 5. 1933, on the establishment of the "united front of struggle of the Communist and Social-Democratic workers against the offensive of capital and fascism". In this manifesto our Parties were recommended to "abstain from attacking the Social-Democratic organizations *during the joint struggle* against capital and fascism" if the Social-Democrats observe two conditions, namely, to carry on a real struggle against fascism and against the lowering of the standard of living of the workers and the unemployed, and on condition that "a most merciless struggle be carried on against all those who violate the conditions of the agreement for the united front as strike-breakers violating the united front of the working class".

These tactics when carrying through the united front, are a new tactic corresponding to the new situation. Formerly, we applied it only in individual cases. (In July, 1932 and in January, 1933, the C.P. of Germany approached the Social-Democratic leadership with a united front proposal, and in 1922, when Lenin was still alive, and when the international situation was different, the Comintern attended a conference with the Second and 2½ Internationals.) These new tactics of the wide application of the united front in 1934 have already led to a number of big successes.

They helped our French comrades, who took the initiative in the counter-offensive against fascism during the February days, to attract the Socialist workers to their side, and gave enormous scope to the movement. They helped our little Austrian Communist Party, in connection with the armed fights in February, to increase its influence enormously among the working class, at the expense of the bankrupt Social-Democratic Party and to treble its membership. They helped our French Communist Party to overcome the resistance of the Socialist Party to the establishment of the united front and to obtain its agreement on this question. They helped our Dutch comrades to develop the revolutionary struggles of the unemployed in July, 1934. They helped our American comrades not long ago to carry out the successful general strike in San Francisco, etc. They helped our Spanish comrades to create better conditions for obtaining contacts with the masses, and for the mobilization of these masses by joining the "Alliance Obrero". They helped our Spanish comrades to carry through in Spain with the Socialists, a general strike and an armed struggle. But when the movement reached its highest phase, namely, the struggle for power, for Soviet Power (in Asturias and Biscay) it became clear that the Socialist organizations which were ready to unfold the struggle insofar as it was a question of the defense of the republic, began to put spokes in the wheel at this highest stage of the struggle.

The facts quoted are only the first steps in the application of the tactics of the broad united front. Their further development opens up big prospects before us. With the correct application of these tactics we shall be able to come into closer contact with the

masses of the Social-Democratic workers who are moving to the Left, we shall be able to mobilize a wide front for the struggle against fascism, against the capitalist offensive and the war danger. We shall be able to lead these masses to the decisive struggle for power. But in order to carry out concretely the *tactics* of a broad united front, and to avoid the dangers connected with it, we must have a *clear aim in view.*

We are at present on the eve of a new round of revolutions and wars. *But no revolution of the people can be victorious at the present time other than under the banner of the Soviets,* no matter under what slogans this revolution breaks out, and no matter what the character of this revolution is, be it democratic or proletarian.

The Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., while noting the maturing of a world revolutionary crisis and the approach of the eve of a new round of revolutions and wars, at the same time advanced the slogan of *Soviet Power as the central political slogan for the present period.* It is clear to us that this slogan must now be the principal political slogan even in those countries which are backward in the revolutionary sense, for the workers there must also know beforehand what path they have to take. But millions of workers in the capitalist countries are as yet not conscious of the meaning of the slogan of "Soviet Power". Their sympathy towards the Soviet Union and its consistent peace policy is growing from day to day, they are becoming convinced with every day that socialism is really being built in the U.S.S.R.

Nevertheless, the majority of workers in the capitalist countries, thanks to the long-standing influence of the Social-Democratic agents of the bourgeoisie over them, are not sure even now, that an armed uprising and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets is the *only* way to socialism, and that there is no other road to victory, irrespective of the peculiarities existing in one or the other country. It is still necessary to *lead* them up to the struggle for Soviet Power. To achieve this, it is necessary to propagate tirelessly the slogan of Soviet Power everywhere, carrying on this propaganda in concrete forms which correspond to the peculiarities of every country. But propaganda alone, however widespread, is altogether insufficient to achieve this. The masses will become convinced of the correctness of the policy of the Communists and their slogans sooner and more easily on the basis of their own experience in struggle.

The events of the last year have presented many striking examples to prove that the Social-Democratic and non-party masses of workers can best be led up to the struggle for Soviet Power in present conditions, by drawing them into the struggle against fascism, the capitalist offensive, and the war danger through the wide application of the united front tactic. The more the mass united front of struggle developed this year, the more receptive they have become to our slogans for Soviet Power (France), the more rapidly they have outlived their Social-Democratic prejudices, the more rapidly has their urge towards Communism grown (Austria) and, finally, the more rapidly when there was a revolutionary situation did they themselves enter the struggle for Soviet Power (Asturias). This is precisely why the Comintern is today paying so much attention to the question of the united front.

But it is only under *certain conditions* that the united front of struggle against fascism, the capitalist offensive and the war danger leads the Social-Democratic and non-party masses up to the struggle for Soviet Power. We must remember, first of all, that the very sense of the words "united front" presupposes the existence of at least two parties in the working class. When Communists fight shoulder to shoulder with other Communists, or Y.C.L.-ers, or with members of the Red trade unions, we do not call this the united front. But the proletariat can successfully conduct the struggle for Soviet Power only under the leadership of *one party,* the *Communist Party, which leads the majority of the working class.*

Second, we must remember that Social-Democracy agrees to form a united front with the Communists only to the extent that the *defensive task* is fulfilled, namely, of repulsing the offensive of fascism, of defending the democratic rights of the workers from the attacks of fascism, and of hindering and delaying the outbreak of war through the joint action of the anti-fascist forces. Social-Democracy agrees to a united front with the Communists while adhering to the principles of bourgeois democracy. *But the aims we pursue are not only defensive but also offensive.* We not only want to repulse the offensive of fascism, or to win back any positions it has seized. What we want in addition is to smash fascism and the *class rule of the bourgeoisie in general,* and to set up the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviet Power, and we can achieve this not in a bloc with Social-Democracy, but in the course of a struggle against it. From this it follows, *that the united front struggle can lead the Social-Democratic and non-party masses to the struggle for Soviet Power, only if in the process of the united front struggle we win over the majority of the working class to our side, and liquidate the mass influence of Social-Democracy.*

This requires, first of all, that the initiative for the united front struggle must come from us.

Second, we must expose not only the Social-Democrats who resist the establishment of the united front,

but also those who attempt to replace the slogan of the united front by the slogan of "organizational unity", which aims at wiping out the line between Communism and Social-Democracy, and drawing the Communist workers onto the Social-Democratic path of conciliation.

Third, we must not hide the face of the Party when we enter the united front, nor must we tie our hands, nor abandon our revolutionary initiative in the development of struggles. At the same time, in proportion as the united front becomes consolidated and more widespread, we must in every way broaden the demands which we present for united front action, we must present demands for an ever greater intensification of the struggle. Only in this way shall we be able to accelerate the process of differentiation in Social-Democracy, to accelerate the elimination from the united front of those Social-Democrats who cannot or will not break away from the policy of class collaboration, and to draw more closely towards us the majority of the Social-Democratic workers and those Social-Democratic organizations or those Social-Democratic officials who are prepared to fight together with us to the end.

At the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., Comrade Stalin stated that:

> "Only when the petty-bourgeois parties — the S.R.'s and the Mensheviks—have become utterly discredited on the basic questions of the revolution, only when the masses have begun to convince themselves of the correctness of our policy, can we lead the masses to the uprising. . . . *This is the root of the idea of the united front. The tactics of the united front were only put into operation by Lenin in order to make it easier for the millions of workers infected by the prejudices of Social-Democratic conciliation to come over to the side of Communism.*" (Our italics—*Ed.*)

We do not regard the united front as a maneuver. We make it easier for the Social-Democratic masses to come over to the side of Communism by showing them in practice, in the practical work of the united front, that we alone carry on a *consistent* struggle against fascism, the capitalist offensive and the war danger. But we do not conceal the chief aim of the united front.

This chief aim of the united front is to make it easier for the Social-Democratic masses to come over to the side of Communism for the conquest of Soviet Power. This was and still remains our chief objective in the new tactics of the united front.

Our new united front tactics have to be coordinated with and subordinated to this.

What changes will have to be made in the tactics of the united front at the present time to conform to the new and changing conditions? Three points should be noted.

1. As we know, the slogan "class against class" was put forward on the eve of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, at the Ninth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. This slogan, of course, did not and does not mean that the bourgeois class must be opposed only by one class, the proletariat, without allies. This slogan merely intensified the struggle against the conciliators.

The slogan of "class against class" was first put forward to meet the tasks facing the French and British Communist Parties in connection with the change proposed by the Ninth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in the electoral tactics of these parties (opposing the Labor Party candidates in Great Britain with our own candidates, putting forward our candidates against the Socialists at the second ballot in France). But it would be a gross mistake to consider that the main feature of the slogan of "class against class" was the change in electoral tactics. This is how the renegade Doriot is now interpreting the slogan, and on this basis he claims that by changing our electoral tactics again in France, we have tacitly abandoned the slogan of "class against class". Doriot's point of view merely testifies to his parliamentary cretinism. The change in the electoral policy, as we wrote in 1928, "is a particular instance of the operation of the general line of the Comintern and the Communist Party". And this general line as set out in the slogan of "class against class" has consisted in emphasizing that "we are the only genuine Party of the working class", that "the Party must correctly combine all the forms and methods of struggle, *paying chief attention to the leadership of the mass struggle of the working class*". We were unable to lead the mass struggle of the working class without "taking the line of intensifying the struggle against Social-Democracy", which at that time had the power and used it to put enormous obstacles in the way of the development of the mass struggle.

At the same time, under the slogan "class against class" the Comintern understood the necessity of struggling against our enemy—the bourgeoisie—and *primarily* of intensifying the struggle against Social-Democracy and the leaders of the reformist trade unions. This arose out of the situation in being at that time, out of the fact that the process of fusion of the upper ranks of the workers' organizations, led by Social-Democracy, with the State apparatus and the employers' organizations, was going on at a specially rapid pace, out of the fact that the leading Social-Democratic Party—the German Party—was still in the government, while other Social-Democratic Parties were either participating in bourgeois governments or were on the point of doing so, out of the fact that this main social buttress of the bourgeoisie had not yet been split and shattered by internal discords.

As the result of this, we needed *above all* to *shatter* this barrier in order to obtain the possibility of developing the mass struggle. At that time, the workers correctly estimated the slogan of "class against class". This was the cause of our great successes at the parliamentary elections in France in 1928, when we first applied this slogan. At these elections we obtained 1,069,000 votes (20 per cent more than in 1924). At these elections the influence of our Party increased particularly in the industrial districts. Our Party became the strongest Party in the proletarian districts of Paris and its suburbs. Tens of thousands of workers came over to us from the Socialists.*

The situation has changed very much since that time.

Social-Democracy is now passing through a crisis, and in some countries (Germany and Austria) it has been smashed up and has become bankrupt in the eyes of the broad masses. At the same time fascism has grown very much and continues to grow, drawing with it broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie and some declassed strata of workers, while in some countries it has taken possession of the State apparatus, which it utilized to terrorize the workers. Simultaneously changes have taken place in the sentiments of broad strata of the working class, particularly those who formerly supported the Social-Democrats and who still follow them.

Among broad strata of Social-Democratic and non-party workers, there is a growing urge towards the united front with the Communists for the struggle against fascism, or else an urge towards Communism. In these conditions the slogan "class against class" remains true at the present time, just as it still remains true that our enemy is the bourgeoisie and that our aim is to develop the mass struggle against the bourgeoisie. But it is much easier now for us to develop the mass struggle, by widely adopting the tactics of the united front, in connection with which we must now, without weakening the struggle, *change the forms of the struggle against Social-Democracy*. We must now mobilize all anti-fascist forces for the struggle against fascism so as to repulse the fascist offensive, and to detach from fascism the masses who follow it, setting ourselves the aim of completely destroying fascism, an aim which can only be achieved by the victory of the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As for Social-Democracy, it will be easiest for us now to put an end to its influence over the masses by properly and correctly conducting the tactics of the united front of struggle against fascism (and war). We shall do so *in the process of this struggle* and in the process of the struggle for the *complete defeat of fascism* and for the victory of the proletarian revolution, actions which we shall not, under any circumstances, be able to carry out in the united front with the Social-Democratic Parties, but without and against these, although it will be together with considerable strata of Social-Democratic workers, sections of the Social-Democratic organizations and some of the Social-Democratic officials, whom we are able to influence in the direction of the revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. All this at the present time constitutes the operation of the slogan—class against class.

2. Formerly, during the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, the tactics of the united front consisted in that when carrying on these tactics for the struggle against the bourgeoisie, and for the mobilization of the masses to this struggle, we met with strong resistance right at the outset from Social-Democracy, which had with it the majority of the working class, and had to begin with the merciless exposure of Social-Democracy. At the present day we also expose the conciliatory policy of Social-Democracy. But now, in view of the crisis of Social-Democracy, in view of the powerful urge of the Social-Democratic workers towards the united front with us, we can and must immediately mobilize the broad masses by way of the united front, exposing Social-Democracy best of all *in the course of the struggle. This means that we must carry on the tactics of the united front in such a way that the Social-Democratic workers will not be able to look upon them as a maneuver on our part, and they really are not a maneuver.*

3. The Sixth Congress of the Comintern proposed to "transfer the main weight to the united front from below". This did not in principle exclude the simultaneous application of the united front from above. But at that time, during the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, the necessary prerequisites did not exist for the application of the tactics of the united front from above. *Nowadays, while we also place the main emphasis on the united front from below, we cannot reject the combination or the attempt to combine the tactics of the united front from below with the tactics of the united front from above, when this can be brought about without making concessions in principle, with all the changes arising therefrom in the methods of criticism of Social-Democracy, while retaining this criticism itself.* We must do this because conditions have changed very much since then.

During the Sixth Congress it was impossible for us to calculate on being unable to compel one Social-Democratic Party or another, or even a Social-Democratic organization, or at any rate one or another of the prominent Social-Democratic officials, to consent to even a limited united front with the Communists, and this rendered difficult our approach to the Social-

* See *The Communist International* for 1928: "The Elections in France and the Policy of the Communist Party".

Democratic masses. But nowadays the oppositional pressure exerted by the working masses from below on the Social-Democratic Parties has grown so powerful, even among the Social-Democratic leaders, that the Social-Democratic Parties or organizations are not only being forced to make "Left" maneuvers on an unheard-of scale, but some of the Social-Democratic Parties, without giving up their cooperation with the bourgeoisie, have been compelled to consent to the formation of the united front with the Communists in the struggle against fascism and war, while certain Social-Democratic organizations and prominent Social-Democratic officials are even prepared to pass into the camp of the Communists and are already doing so.

The new situation is now such that we must *make bold efforts to extend the tactics of the united front* if we wish to take advantage of the favorable objective situation in order to attract to our struggle the broad masses of Social-Democratic workers who are not ready yet today to become Communists, if we wish to take advantage of the favorable situation to win over the majority of the working class, to rally together all the anti-fascist forces, to mobilize the broad masses in the struggle against fascism and the war danger, and to lead these masses to the oncoming decisive struggles for power, for Soviet Power.

Are these new tactics of a wider application of the tactics of the united front fraught with dangers? Undoubtedly they are. We must not forget that if the Social-Democratic Party as a whole, and the Social-Democratic Party as such, agrees today or tomorrow to conclude a pact with the Communist Party on the united front, the aims which it (the Social-Democratic Party) follows, if not its nearest aims, then those which are more distant, are different in principle from ours, and are *irreconcilable* with them. When they conclude an agreement with us on the united front for struggle against fascism, they have as their final aim the restoration or the consolidation of the bourgeois-democratic regime, which is one of the forms of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. But when we make such an agreement and are ready to fight with all our energy for the defense of the restoration of even the small democratic rights of the workers, in defense of even the workers' smallest economic demands, our ultimate aim is to destroy every form of the domination of the bourgeoisie, and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In view of this antithesis of ultimate aims and the differences in principle which arise therefrom in tactics and organization, the Social-Democratic Parties can utilize the agreement which they make with us on the united front against us in order to weaken our struggle against the bourgeoisie. And we have to admit that they are already doing this here and there and not without success.

We must now carry on the united front tactics very boldly. But in order to avoid the dangers inherent in these tactics, we must never for a moment lose our revolutionary perspectives when applying these tactics. We must link up these tactics closely with our strategic task of winning the majority of the working class for the direct struggle for power, the Soviet Power. We must subordinate these tactics to our strategic task and never for a moment leave the latter out of sight.

In practice this means that when carrying on the tactics of the united front, we must not hide the face of our Party, that we must not for the sake of agreement limit ourselves when carrying through mass strikes, struggles, that we must not limit our activity to the framework of the agreement, and that we must not render it more difficult for ourselves to undertake the independent leadership of the masses. This means that when concluding an agreement with the Social-Democratic Parties, and that when for the sake of this agreement we make such concessions as to refrain from mutual attacks in those places where we are carrying on joint struggle, while we conscientiously fulfill these obligations, we must not at the same time give up decisive and merciless criticism when this agreement is disrupted or sabotaged. We must also not refrain from such a criticism, which in form does not act as a provocation to the breaking of the agreement, and which is directed towards widening the tasks facing the united front struggle. When organizing the struggle from below, we must not refrain from breaking through the too narrow limits of the agreement.

So as to secure new members for the Party and to extend our influence over the masses and to lead their struggle, we must not give up either the propaganda of our program or criticism, which though not abusive is yet clear, definite and based on the principle of the program, strategy and tactics of those with whom we enter into agreement, etc.

In the sphere of trade union tactics we must in every way call on our members to work in the reformist trade unions and struggle for the unity of the trade union movement. But at the same time we must demand, in places where the question arises of uniting our and the reformist trade union organizations, that this unity be built on the program of the class struggle and on a democratic basis, *i.e.*, on the basis of the election of the executive committee, proportional representation and the permission of freedom of criticism. We must struggle against the demand that our trade unions be absorbed into the reformist unions. We must fight against the demand that the trade unions remain neutral and give up the political struggle. We must put forward the demand which is the reverse of this, namely, that the trade unions be transformed into militant class

organizations which give every support to the political struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie, fascism and war, etc.

* * *

The Sixth Congress of the Comintern stated that the chief danger in the Communist Parties at that time was the Right danger, without, of course, denying thereby the existence of "Left" mistakes and the necessity for struggle against them. The Plenums of the E.C.C.I. which followed the Sixth Congress of the Comintern also spoke of the Right danger being the chief opportunist danger at the given stage.

How do matters stand now with the question of the main danger? In the course of the whole period beginning with the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, the Right danger has been the main danger because this has been the period of the breakdown and the end of capitalist stabilization, the period of the maturing of the revolutionary crisis, of the approach of a second round of revolutions and wars. It has been so because this has been a period of preparations for the oncoming revolutionary battles which require of the proletariat and its Communist vanguard that they display supreme selflessness and firmness against the disintegrating influence of Social-Democracy. The Seventh Congress will discuss questions of the period in which not only the preparations for decisive battles will take place, but in which battles themselves will take place in a number of countries.

In December, 1928, Comrade Stalin, when speaking at the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., directed his fire against the Right opportunists in the Comintern and said that "anyone who does not want to repeat the mistakes of 1923 must arouse the thoughts of the Communists and must call them onwards, must prepare the masses for the oncoming battles, and must take all measures to ensure that the Communist Parties do not drag at the tail of events, and the working class are not taken unawares". In the conditions existing on the eve of a new round of wars and revolutions, it is in place to recall the famous words of Marx written in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*:

> ". . . Proletarian Revolutions . . . constantly criticize themselves, every now and then stopping and returning to what has been done in order to start again . . . again and again retreating before the indefinite magnitude of its own aims, until a situation arises which cuts off all retreat, until the circumstances themselves shout: *'Hic Rhodos, hic Salto'.*" (Retranslated.)

All this danger of "retreating before the indefinite magnitude of its own aims" and the danger lest the Communist Parties should be at the tail of events and that the working class should be caught unawares, is now *the main danger.*

But the fact that for the whole of the present period the Right danger is the main danger does not in any degree relieve us of the duty of fighting on two fronts, when we remember that the danger against which we have ceased to fight may grow into the main danger. It is particularly necessary at the present time to display the greatest vigilance in respect to those dangers which have arisen and will arise in connection with the necessity of conducting the new tactics of widely operating the united front.

In order to widen the application of the tactics of the united front it has been necessary in some places, and here and there is still necessary, to overcome quite strong "Left" sectarian isolation (which, it should not be forgotten, is very often combined with Right opportunist passivity).

We know, for example, how strong was the contempt for work in the reformist trade unions among the members of our Parties. This was caused to some extent by "Left" sectarianism (and to a still greater degree by passivity, by surrendering to the difficulties facing Bolshevik work inside the reformist trade unions).

We know how strong was the contempt for work in the fascist mass organizations, and how strongly our Italian Party, for example, suffered from this for a number of years and how it was isolated from the masses by this big shortcoming which was caused to some extent by relics of "Left" sectarian Bordiganism (and to a still greater extent by a Right opportunist overestimation of the forces of fascism, and an underestimation of the powers of the proletariat, a passive anticipation of a "crisis at the top", and reliance on spontaneity). We know that the leadership of the Italian Party recently committed a "Left" sectarian mistake (which, by the way, it speedily corrected) by taking up a boycottist attitude to the law regarding the militarization of the population.

Further, we know how difficult it was when the fascist dictatorship was established in Germany for our comrades there to open the doors wide for the Social-Democratic workers who were ready to enter our Party, out of fear that in conditions where there was a decline in the number of our cadres owing to the fascist terror, a powerful inflow of Social-Democratic workers would alter the face of our organizations. By tradition, by routine, our comrades did not take into account the fact that the Social-Democratic workers who are ready to come to us under the conditions of the fascist terror are very much different from the former Social-Democratic workers, and that they would be made much more rapidly into good Communists, naturally if we exerted our influence. We know that the central organ of the C.P.G. recently made a "Left" sectarian mistake in connection with the tactics of the united front.

We also know how difficult it was and still is to

give up the idea that every Social-Democratic official who uses "Left" language does this entirely for demagogic purposes, as part of his "Left" maneuvers. We know how difficult it was and still is to master the point that we must now differentiate between pseudo-Left Social-Democratic functionaries and those who are really Left. We know how difficult it was and still is to some extent to master the point that the influence of Social-Democracy cannot be done away with merely by such harsh words as "social-fascist" and "social traitor" and that in present conditions it is more important to show by the practical experience of the struggle that the Social-Democrats betray the cause of the working class. All these views and habits at the present time constitute a "Left" sectarian danger and therefore in order to break the ice, in order to clear a path for ourselves to the tactics of the broad united front, we have had in the past and often now have in various countries to direct a powerful, and sometimes the main, fire to the "Left".

In proportion as the new tactics of the united front are understood and begin to be adopted, due to the absence of a clear objective, the Right danger arises, the danger of separating the tactics of the united front from our strategic tasks, a state of things which not only goes to help the Socialist Parties at our expense, but which can very much compromise the very tactics of the united front in general in the eyes of the revolutionary workers. The Right danger can grow more intense in connection with the spread of agreements with the Social-Democratic Parties and branches of these parties, unless our vigilance is sharpened. The Right danger threatens us all the more because, on the one hand, in spite of the crisis of Social-Democracy, the Socialist Parties are still increasing their influence in a number of countries, and on the other hand, Social-Democracy is now using "Left" maneuvers on such a scale and to such a degree as never before; and because our agreements with the Social-Democratic Parties wipe out the dividing line between us and the Social-Democrats in the eyes of the broad masses, and we must therefore all the more emphasize this distinction.

In countries where Social-Democracy has been driven underground and has been smashed up, and where the masses have left it, they have not come to us and will not do so unless we can convince them that the bankruptcy of Social-Democracy was no chance happening, but arises from the foundations of its policy. We must still further prove to the Social-Democratic masses that we can defend their interests better than the Social-Democratic Party can. But, since we have not got such big funds and paid jobs at our disposal as the Social-Democrats formerly had, we can give much less help to the members of the Party and trade unions than it was able to. We can defend the interests of the masses only by developing their struggle. Therefore, it will be very difficult to prove our superiority over Social-Democracy and the reformists if when forming the united front with the Socialists we tie our hands as far as the independent struggle is concerned and restrict ourselves merely to holding meetings, as is sometimes being done at present.

The Right danger now assumes the most varied forms. We have already pointed out some of the forms it takes, when speaking of what concessions we may make in principle (and which our comrades are sometimes making). Among other things, the Right danger is expressed in the denial of the growth of the world revolutionary crisis and the exaggeration of the strength of the class enemy and an underestimation of our forces. In the fascist countries the Right danger is expressed in the fact that we have at length begun to use legal possibilities but neglect the task of breaking through legality. In our Spanish Party the Right danger was clearly expressed in the fact that while there was a development of mass economic struggles, our comrades (in the conditions of revolution!) did not link up economic demands with the slogans of the struggle for power, while the Socialists not only talked but shrieked about these slogans even though under the pressure of the tasks of the moment.

Our French comrades were obliged to make a series of concessions, not one-sided of course, in order to reach agreement with the French Socialist Party. The agreement has given good results, as shown by the Cantonal elections in France, at which we had greater success than the Socialists had. But our French comrades sometimes gave way to the pressure of the Socialists, and incorrectly interpreted the conditions of the agreement, and did not sufficiently raise before the masses the points which distinguish us in principle from the Socialists, did not prepare and conduct independent strikes, after the Socialists had refused to include strikes in the conditions of the agreement. This applies to an incomparably greater degree to the agreement between the Belgian Young Socialists and the Y.C.L., in which our comrades made the grossest opportunist mistakes.

Even in the C.P. of Poland, which was steeled in the struggle against Right opportunism, our comrades made a Right opportunist mistake (immediately corrected by the C.C.) when negotiating with the Bund on the conditions of the united front, and agreed to recognize the Bund as a class party of the proletariat. A number of gross opportunist mistakes were made in the C.P. of Czechoslovakia in connection with the tactics of the united front (the revival of the old opportunist slogan of forming a coalition government of Communists and Social-Democrats, and a number of other mistakes).

The Right danger is the main danger throughout the present period as a whole. This does not exclude the fact that here and there we have had to struggle with all our strength against "Left" sectarian deviations wherever they have arisen.

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In the present article we have by no means exhausted all the questions which will arise at the Seventh Congress. We have practically not touched on the concrete problems and the practical tasks which face the various Parties.

All the questions which will arise at the Seventh Congress must, in accordance with the decision of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., be widely and thoroughly discussed during the period still remaining before the Congress, both in our journal and in the Communist press of the Sections of the Communist International. The aim of the present article is simply to give the *basis* for such a discussion.

THE UNITED FRONT IN GREAT BRITAIN

By HARRY POLLITT

(*Speech at the meeting of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., evening session, Oct.* 11, 1934.)

COMRADES, I want to deal with some questions in connection with the united front, the fight against fascism, the Trade Union Congress and the trade union work of our Party.

THE UNITED FRONT

In July, after the Austrian events, the Central Committee of the Party issued a united front appeal to the Labor Party, the Trade Union Congress and the Cooperative Party. Fifty thousand copies of the appeal had been printed and we arranged for its distribution at the key factories in some of the most important idustrial towns. In addition, copies were sent to every local Labor Party and Trades Council.

This appeal received a very good reception from the mass of workers. The Labor Party replied to our letter, saying "there were now no new circumstances to justify any change in policy on the part of the Labor leaders". We answered this and again distributed another 25,000 copies of our reply. It was quite clear that a very favorable situation was developing for the united front, especially after the news of the united front agreement between the French Socialist Party and the French Communists, which has had very important reflections in the ranks of the working class in Britain.

We reviewed the situation in the August Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party. The C.C. Plenum recognized, first, that the outstanding feature of the situation in Britain was the passionate desire for the united front on the part of the workers. Second, that unless our Party can organize this unity, the working class movement faces the possibility of terrible defeats. Third, that what has been done in France can be done in Britain. Fourth, that if the British working class could force the National Government to withdraw its charges against Pollitt and Mann, the British workers can bring such pressure to bear on the Labor leaders as will force them to change their policy towards the united front.

In reviewing the situation in the Party, we stated that in the Party as a whole, there was not the serious interest in developing the united front which is necessary, and that when the Labor leaders rejected our appeals there was an attitude in the Party of "Thank goodness, that happened, we don't have to bother with that". We had to end this attitude once and for all, and make it clear that when we made an appeal for unity it was a serious appeal and not a paper document, that it was our intention really to organize concrete united front action, and that the appeal must be realized in practice.

The Central Committee meeting resulted in some good changes taking place throughout the Party and in a number of districts we have excellent examples of the beginning of united front activity in earnest. For example, in Liverpool, 29 trade union branches endorsed the Central Committee appeal. One trade union branch circulated a resolution, appealing for the united front, to every other trade union branch affiliated to the Trades Council, and demanded that the Liverpool Trades Council call a special conference at which every working-class organization should be represented to organize a united front against war and fascism. The result of this is the decision of the Manchester Trades Council to organize an all-inclusive counter-demonstration, including the Communist Party and the Independent Labor Party.

In Walthamstow, an important area in the East End of London, the Trades Council decided to support the Party's appeal by a vote of 14 to 11. The officials of that Council appeared to be worried about the decision and they therefore called a special delegates' conference of all trade union branches in Walthamstow affiliated to the Trades Council.

Forty-four delegates were present. After the case had been put for the Communist Party's letter, 13 speakers asked questions and 13 took part in the discussion. The general line of the questions in the discussion was as follows: "Is the Communist Party really sincere this time in the united front?" "If we come to an agreement would the Communists abide by the decisions of the majority?" "How can we ask for the united front in the fight against war and fascism and fight the Labor Party in the elections?" "What would be the attitude of the Communist Party if it should be decided to make a war upon Germany in order to free it from fascism and make it safe for democracy?" "What was the attitude of the Communist Party to the question of bringing the unorganized workers into the united front?"

Finally, at the end of the discussion, 42 delegates voted for the united front and two delegates voted against.

One of the best examples of local initiative was in Bilston, a small town in the Midlands, where we have a comparatively new local. Immediately we issued our appeal, the local mobilized its members and sent a personal delegation to every trade union branch secretary in the town and to every local Labor Party secretary. In this way they not only gained sympathy, but ensured that a discussion took place in every working class organization in that town. It is true that we did not win any decisive victories for the united front in that town, but the important fact is that the united front was discussed in every local workers' organization. On the Birmingham Trades Council, big discussions have taken place; as also on the London Trades Council, Glasgow Trades Council, and Bradford and Manchester Trades Councils.

After the September 9 anti-fascist demonstration in Hyde Park, the Central Committee again decided to approach the Labor Party. We stated: the September 9 action has shown that the Communist Party can bring 150,000 workers into Hyde Park against fascism. What could be done if the organized labor movement had taken part in this counter-demonstration to the fascists? Therefore we propose a discussion without any preliminary conditions or restrictions, to hear what, in your opinion, are the obstacles in the way of the united front, and for you to hear our answers.

This has had a very good effect in the labor movement, and many resolutions have been passed by the local organizations demanding that the Executive Committee hear the Communists, hear what they have to say, and discuss their proposals. But both at the Trade Union Congress and the Southport Labor Party Conference, that have recently terminated, this question was debated and defeated by a very big vote. This, however, does not represent the feeling of the rank and file of the Labor Party and the trade unions, but is the bloc vote of the trade union bureaucracy.

What are the arguments advanced by the Labor Party and Trade Union leaders against the united front? First, that it is impossible to have a serious united front with an organization that believes in dictatorship and revolution. Second, that the Labor Party, Trade Union Congress and Cooperative Party are the mass organizations of the workers and represent the united front, and that therefore nothing else is necessary. Third, why should such big, powerful organizations like the Labor Party be expected to take up united action with such small organizations as the Communist Party and the I.L.P., and finally, the old argument is put forward that the Communists are not sincere in the proposals they are putting forward.

The Labor leaders have been able to give those answers simply because we have been unable as yet to organize the mass pressure from below that will compel them to change their line.

In the recent period the Labor Party leaders have used a further argument against the united front in what they describe as the "splitting tactics" of the Communist Party in the elections. The experience of the development of the united front over recent months has shown that it is necessary that we work out a clear line of united front tactics, both in relation to the municipal elections in November and March, and in the preparations for the general elections. Such a line will not mean the abandonment of our policy of "class against class" or the withdrawing of the independent role of the Party. On the contrary, we must discuss a line which will strengthen the policy of class against class and bring the Party forward as a real political force in the country. Therefore, we are now proposing an extension of united front tactics in the immediate municipal elections to take place.

It may be stated that what is proposed is a revision of the Ninth Plenum on the British question, so far as our electoral tactics are concerned, but if we read the Ninth Plenum resolution, we will find that we never made a serious attempt to operate the exceptionally important clause in the resolution in regard to united front tactics in elections. For example, in the Ninth Plenum resolution on Britain, it states:

> "In some districts, active support to Laborites, who pledge themselves to work for the elementary demands of the working class, and for accepting the Communist Party into the Labor Party, is admissable.
>
> "Voting for Labor Party candidates in the remaining districts must be definitely decided upon only after all possible preliminary work has been

done in the matter of putting up our own and Left worker candidates."

We are proposing nothing today that means a rejection of the decisions of the Ninth Plenum, and if we look back over the period since the Ninth Plenum was held, I cannot remember a single election campaign where we really made a serious attempt to develop united front tactics, either with the Labor Party or the I.L.P. in the elections.

And yet we are bound to take note of the fact that one of the biggest barriers to our getting into closer contact with the reformist workers is the fact that they deeply resent what they call "splitting the vote" in the elections. This resentment has become stronger since the German and Austrian events. At the present time, in connection with the forthcoming elections, it is naturally stronger in the districts where there is a Labor majority in the Councils and we have to work out a line which takes this card out of the hands of the Labor leaders. The Labor leaders, in the speeches they make, the conferences they organize, when they meet with opposition because of their refusal to take part in the united front, declare that the Communist Party is "splitting" the vote. Despite the fact that we can show with truth in many examples that not the Communists, but the Labor leaders have split the working class, have disrupted the ranks, and now are preventing the united front by their policy, nevertheless we are confident that we can work out a line which will take that card out of their hands. This will lead to further unity of the masses in the struggle against the National Government and the fascists and will strengthen the Communist Party and bring us nearer to the masses.

Therefore, we are proposing to come forward with our own independent municipal election program, and to make the question of the united front the biggest issue in the municipal election campaign, extending the demand for unity of action among the Labor Party and trade union members. What is our election program? The following are our main demands: Refusal to operate the Means Test, increased winter unemployed relief scales, increased children's allowances, general demand to operate work schemes of social value at trade union wages and conditions, free meals for necessitous school children, free milk to all school children up to five, extension of creches, welfare centers and clinics, restoration of all economies imposed on municipal employees in 1931, reduction of workers' rents, no support for slave camps, the closing of fascist barracks and against the Unemployment and Sedition Bills.

We shall put forward our candidates and carry the campaign for our program in all localities where the Party has mass influence and can gain results, with increased prestige for the Communist Party. This means that in the November elections we should put forward our candidates in all areas where the Party has influence among the workers' and where this influence can be expressed either in the return of the candidate or where we can get a really significant vote. In localities where the Party had no serious chances of winning either a significant number of votes or a seat, or where we do not contest the election, we propose to the Labor Party that they support measures aiming at achieving some of the demands in our platform, with a declaration that they favor the united front against fascism and war. If the Labor candidates give satisfactory guarantees, we will give full support to the candidates, take part in the election meetings and not only explain why we give them support but popularize our policy in our own independent election meetings which we will simultaneously organize.

Wherever there is a locality where our Party would get a big vote or where our Party has a chance of winning, then under no circumstances do we withdraw our candidate, but propose to the Labor Party that they support our candidate on the same basis that we would be prepared to support theirs. We shall immediately approach the I.L.P., both at the center, and in the districts, to discuss with them the question of an electoral bloc, and we should try to aim at getting agreement on the basis that each Party support the candidate who received the highest vote in the last municipal elections. This is of chief importance in Glasgow where a number of I.L.P. and C.P. candidates ran and were fighting each other, and, on the basis of the last election results, we believe we can reach an electoral arrangement.

We are also proposing that, in places where the C.P., I.L.P. and Labor Party are all putting forward candidates, an attempt be made to reach agreement on the candidate who can best express the united front desires of the workers. For this purpose a Workers' Selection Conference should be held; let the three candidates be voted upon at that conference, and a workers' candidate be selected on the basis of the united front. Should the Labor Party refuse and we have reached an agreement with the I.L.P. and if the Labor candidate has the least chance in the election, we should propose to them that they withdraw their candidate from the field. This will be one of the most effective means at present for consolidating the demand for unity, extending the united front, and bringing forward new measures to combat the recent decisions of the Weymouth Trade Union Congress and the Southport Labor Party Conference.

We must also discuss the possibility of cases where there is a fight between the capitalist and Labor

candidate, and where there exists a danger of the victory of the capitalist candidates. In these circumstances, where the Labor candidate rejects our proposals for a united front, even then we will consider the possibility of the Party leadership in each separate case deciding whether to withdraw our candidate if his going forward would mean the victory of the capitalist candidate, and thus to recommend to the workers to vote for the Labor candidate. Where we recommend to the workers to vote for the Labor candidate, this will be done on class issues that the C.P. will carry into the elections in order to prevent the return of a class enemy of the workers to any of the existing Town Councils. If the Labor Party refuses our offer, and we are still recommending to the workers to vote for their candidate, we will, of course, continue as usual to organize our separate election meetings, we shall criticize the policy of the Labor Party and put this issue to the workers, and ask them to endorse our demands and the united front tactics we are operating. This will enable us to reach many thousands of Labor Party workers and win their support for the united front.

Finally, I believe the C.C. should publish immediately a manifesto explaining that the situation at home and abroad demands that this line be carried out in order to build up the unity of the working class. We can formulate this declaration and carry it out in such a way as will show to the working class that the C.P. is a Party of serious political importance and that these proposals are a still further attempt on our part to strengthen the united front against the workers' enemies. We are convinced that this policy will then become the medium through which we can remove many objections to the united front that at present exist amongst the Socialist workers, and will undoubtedly draw our Party much closer to them than we are at present.

If, therefore, we take careful note of the experiences and arguments, the character of the negotiations that will take place in the coming November elections, we shall then have a basis for extending a wider discussion on the whole question of the Party's line in connection with the coming general elections and particularly we will be able to get important experiences and material that will enable us to work out a clear line in our Party Congress in January, in connection with the coming general election.

Thus, at the very moment that the Labor leaders are attempting to make it more difficult for Communists to work in the trade unions and Trades Councils, when they threaten to expel from the Labor Party all their members who are identified with the united front—at this moment our Party comes forward with new proposals which will not weaken but strengthen the class struggle, I am certain that this policy will be accepted by the Labor Party workers and will compel the leaders to revise their present attitude towards the united front.

THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM

In April it was clear already that the opposition to fascism in Britain was exceptionally strong and gave us the best opportunity to develop the united front.

In the resolution of the E.C.C.I., it stated that the Communist Party must set itself then as one of its central tasks, the organization of the masses against fascism. I think we can say here that we have endeavored to fulfill this task. There can be no question about it, that until June, 1934, Mosley was making progress in England, holding big meetings, getting the support of a powerful group of newspapers. He organized a demonstration in Albert Hall, holding 10,000 people, last May. The Communist Party made a great mistake in allowing that demonstration to go by unchallenged. Over 10,000 people attended, but 2,000 people went to the Hall to demonstrate against him, without leadership or preparation. At this meeting in the Albert Hall, Mosley announced that the fascists were going to conduct the biggest political campaign England had ever seen, that they would organize in June a meeting in the Olympia, holding 50,000 people and another in one of the biggest stadiums, White City, holding 150,000.

At once the Communist Party issued a call to prepare to fight Mosley at the Olympia on June 6. That call was answered in a magnificent manner by the working class. In order to make a fight inside the Hall effective, the Party took measures to ensure a counter-demonstration. We were able to organize processions to the Olympia, and, as everyone now knows, that meeting marked a turning point in the development of fascism in Britain. Mosley was compelled to resort to unparalleled scenes of brutality and the effect of it was tremendous on the public opinion that had been neutral at first, but which now definitely came out against him. Then he had a series of meetings all over Britain where the workers turned out in thousands to demonstrate against him. At a meeting in Sheffield, 25,000 demonstrated outside the hall where he had his meeting, a demonstration such as had never been seen there before. There were similar scenes in Bristol, Newcastle, Swansea, etc., and all the time the Party endeavored to keep this anti-fascist feeling going.

The Labor Party came out very strongly with the demand for free speech for Mosley, and the government was compelled to organize a debate in the House of Commons on the question of the Olympian events. As a result of the debate, the government announced that it would hold a conference of the Liberal, Tory and Labor Parties to discuss the ques-

tion of future political meetings and their conduct. This conference took place.

Mosley announced his intention to hold a mass demonstration in the East End of London on July 22. The C.P. called for a counter-demonstration, and it was clear, weeks before July 22, that Mosley would never be allowed to march down the East End. Our Party organized a demonstration on July 22 that was the biggest demonstration seen since the general strike in 1926. Then the proprietors of the big stadium at White City got the wind up and refused Mosley the use of the Stadium. Mosley announced he would hold his fascist demonstration in Hyde Park on September 9.

A meeting of Labor Party workers, comrades of the I.L.P., and trade unionists was called. Over 80, turned up at this meeting and the question was put: are we going to organize a counter-demonstration against Mosley on September 9? Everyone was unanimous and a number of Labor Party leaders, I.L.P. leaders and C.P. leaders then signed a joint manifesto, and we commenced the campaign for our counter-demonstration. We can say that without any doubt the Party carried through this demonstration, and although we drew in other people, all the practical and detailed work fell upon the C.P. So far as our experience is concerned, it was a model of the way a campaign should be carried out. The Party distributed over one million leaflets and resorted to forms of publicity which, whilst the demonstration took place in London, brought it right home to millions of workers all over England. Some of the forms of anti-fascist activity were as follows:

At a big classical concert in the West End of London, a concert was being broadcast, and a comrade was able to get to the microphone and issue anti-fascist slogans to call upon the workers to come to Hyde Park. At a big restaurant in London, where dance music was being broadcast, a comrade was able to get to the microphone and made a splendid appeal against the fascists which millions of people heard. Similar events took place in picture halls where music was being broadcast. Slogans were painted everywhere in London. It was impossible to go anywhere without meeting anti-fascist slogans and the call to Hyde Park.

The nearer we came to the actual day itself, the more the press became full of stories about "the Communist blood bath battle", "The Communist provocation". Every day the Labor leaders came out and told the workers not to go to Hyde Park. A big meeting was called, 1,500 workers attending, to discuss the question of who is right, the anti-fascists who say "Fight Mosley", or the Labor Party which says "Stay Away". This was really a splendid meeting. It was absolutely unanimous for the line of the anti-fascist struggle.

September 9, comrades, was a triumph. We have never, in our experience, witnessed such scenes and no one in London ever remembered such a demonstration in Hyde Park. It was not merely the fact that 150,000 people were in Hyde Park, that the Mosley demonstration was an absolute fiasco, but it was the fighting spirit of the workers, the discipline, the splendid anti-fascist banners they had made, and it was really a tremendous victory for our Party. It is interesting to quote the opinion of the *Manchester Guardian* because the *Manchester Guardian* for a week before had been saying our demonstration would be a fiasco and it was also calling upon the workers to stay away. This is what the *Guardian* had to say the day after the demonstration:

> "The point for Sir Oswald Mosley to ponder over is that if this counter-demonstration, which outnumbered his by about 20 to 1, could be gathered from such a small party as the Communists, with large numbers of Londeners acting on their own initiative, on what scale would the opposition have been had it had the whole force of organized labor behind it."

We have made tremendous use of that quotation because that was what the workers in Hyde Park were saying—that if we could do this acting against the Labor Party, with the Labor Party we could have brought a million workers to Hyde Park. One result of this demonstration is that at the Southport Labor Party Conference, a suggestion was made that they organize an anti-fascist demonstration on the same day in all the principal towns in England.

The *Daily Herald* stated that 500 Communists marched to Hyde Park, and such a scandalous write-up of the proceedings had a boomerang effect because never has the *Daily Herald* received so many thousands of protests from its readers.

The committee that was responsible for organizing this demonstration met the following day, and we came to the following conclusion so far as the weaknesses were concerned: that we had failed to draw in sufficient trade unions and the local Labor Parties, and that we were late in issuing a statement that the intention of the demonstration was not a demonstration of violence against Mosley, but a mass political demonstration of anti-fascist opinion. It is quite clear that if we had issued the line a week earlier, we could have brought another 50,000 workers with us that day.

It was decided to carry out the following next steps:

1. To assist the comrades in Manchester to organize a counter-demonstration against Mosley there. That was done, and the same success we had in London on the 9th, we had in Manchester on the 29th of September.

2. To prepare opposition to the Mosley demonstration in Albert Hall in October.

3. To organize an anti-fascist demonstration in Albert Hall in November.

4. To do everything in our power to get the local Trades Councils to call anti-fascist conferences which would include every section of the working class movement.

5. To make a special effort to influence the London Trades Council Conference on September 26.

6. To develop the anti-fascist trade union movements that are springing up all over London, for instance, amongst the busmen, railwaymen and printers, there are now really strong anti-fascist movements.

7. To bring out a weekly anti-fascist paper; and finally, to prepare a memorandum as a basis of discussion by a number of leading people in the labor movement, to discuss the question of fascism, and to issue a call for a national anti-fascist congress either at the end of this year or the beginning of 1935.

All these steps have been taken in hand and already we can see some results coming in from the localities. The Bradford Trades Council is going to call an "all-in" united front conference, and the Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow Trades Councils all have this question on the agenda.

It will be interesting also to report the proceedings of the anti-fascist conference organized by the London Labor Party and Trades Council.

Immediately after the Olympia events, the London Labor leaders tried to canallize the anti-fascist opinion by promising to organize an anti-fascist conference, which took place on September 26. Only those would attend who were prepared to sign the constitution and policy of the Labor Party and Trade Union Congress. 1,220 delegates took part, 577 from trade unions, 502 from local Labor Parties and the League of Youth, and 141 from the Coop Guilds. We had 70 comrades there, but not one of our speakers got the floor. The chairman allowed no amendments, and, as he thought, carefully picked the speakers.

Nineteen speakers took the floor, 15 were against the resolution and against the platform. Of these 15, five were from Labor Parties, four from trade unions, five from the League of Youth and one from the Cooperatives. And in spite of the fact that Clynes, Morrison, Williams and Clay tried their very best to down this opposition, every opposition speaker had a great reception, and many of their speeches were models of the way the case ought to be put. Only the Socialist Democratic Federation supported the line of the platform and their speaker was Montague, who was a member of the Labor Government. Montague said this conference was alarming, that it showed how far the Communist poison had penetrated the London labor movement and that the time had come to stop the Labor Party speakers from making Communist speeches. That was as far as he got because the delegates did not allow him to finish.

When the resolution was put, over one-third of the delegates voted against it. We consider this as important as September 9. We proposed immediately the following steps: to invite the 15 opposition speakers to a meeting of the Coordinating Committee against fascism, to publish their speeches in pamphlet form, that the London District Party Committee and our local in London should immediately make a new approach to the local Labor Parties, that we should try to get four divisional conferences called in London by the Trades Councils, and that we should aim to get the trade union district committees all over the country to call special anti-fascist meetings of their members.

* * *

Now, comrades, some conclusions from this brief review. First it is absolutely clear to us in Britain that the main task is now to give leadership and organization to this wide, broad anti-fascist feeling. To bring in not only the working class but other sections of the population that are anti-fascist. To go ahead with this drive for local trades councils, to initiate united front conferences and demonstrations and also for the preparation of a national anti-fascist congress. We are confident that to this anti-fascist manifesto we can get signatures of people who really matter, of people who have mass influence. We must more effectively combine the fight against Mosley with the fight against the National Government, linking up our slogans of "Close Down Mosley's Barracks", and "suppress his fascist army" with the fight against the Sedition Bill and Section 2 of the Unemployment Act. We must do more convincing propaganda showing the responsibility of the Labor leaders for the development of fascism in their slogan of free speech for Mosley, in their support for more police influence. We must more effectively combine the fight against Mosley with the struggle against the advocacy of their slogans of "the sinister analogy between Communism and fascism" and above all, of their refusal to take part in the united front.

We believe it is necessary to maintain the greatest flexibility in the development of this movement, that there should be no talk of cards, membership dues, but let the movement develop and encourage it to develop and extend in every way possible, particularly in the localities and in the trade unions. To extend the work now of the coordinating committees to the whole of the country. We are convinced that along these lines we are going to make a decisive

break, both in the trade unions and in the local Labor Parties, and therefore the connection now of our tactics in the elections with the leadership of this anti-fascist fight without any doubt at all gives our Party perspectives of coming into closer touch and of contact with reformist masses than we have had any time since the formation of the Party.

THE TRADE UNION CONGRESS

Some remarks about the recent Trade Union Congress at Weymouth. This took place in September and there can be no doubt that it was the most reactionary Congress since the end of the War. It is useful to remember that at the time the Congress met, over two million workers were demanding wage increases, and yet no time was spent at the Congress in discussing this vital question. The main discussions were carefully formulated in such a way as not to touch the basic issues for the workers of wages, hours and the general class struggle in England. Seven of our comrades were there and worked exceptionally well, despite the big obstacles, particularly in the debates on fascism and war, and were supported by a number of the delegates.

What are the main decisions of the Weymouth Congress? Refusal to formulate any common plan of action on the wages and hours questions; refusal to take any mass action against fascism in Britain; dropping of the general strike against war. Here, we must take note of the fact that there has been tremendous opposition throughout the labor movement to the proposal of dropping the general strike against war, and also to the proposal that the British labor movement should support its government in any war against an aggressor nation. We must also take note of the arguments used both by the Labor leaders at Weymouth and also at the Labor Party congress. What is their main argument now? It is this, that if it is right for the Soviet Union to build up a system of collective pacts and to agree to participate in action against an aggressor, then it is right for the British labor movement to follow such an illustrious example.

This is the line they put and this is the line that carried with the delegates at the Trade Union Congress. The Trade Union Congress rejected the united front and gave instructions to all local trades councils to find ways and means whereby they can prevent the Communist delegates coming from the trade union branches. The role of the bureaucracy was strong throughout the Congress.

It was also reported that there had been a special meeting of the General Council of the Amsterdam International and proceedings of the General Council were reported to the Weymouth Congress as follows: on the question of war the Brussels resolution still stood and that it was necessary to do even some more hard thinking in this respect; that the best way to fight fascism was to revive the belief in parliamentary democracy; on the question of the united front, that no united front was possible until the Red unions have been dissolved and gone back to the reformist centers, and finally to make a serious effort to bring in the American Federation of Labor. To achieve that objective Citrine is going to America to open up negotiations.

What are the next steps the Party has to take in regard to the trade unions?

First of all, to improve the trade union work, and now compel every member eligible to belong to the trade union to get into the trade unions. Of course, this is not a new thing, in some districts we have made very good progress in this, particularly in South Wales, but in other districts such as in London and Scotland, our activity must be intensified.

We must bring about much better organization of our fractions in the unions, prepare a campaign for winning of elective posts in the coming trade union elections in December and January and for the next annual trade union congresses. We must develop and extend the existing rank-and-file movemen tamong the busmen, railwaymen and miners, and extend it to other industries, especially the docks, seamen, metal and textile. We have to make clear the driving force for this work must be the Party fraction and individual members of the Party who work in the unions, and try to get a better form of coordination between the rank-and-file movements on a national scale, to extend the work in the busmen's union, which is purely a London union, to other centers, and to begin at once to coordinate the activities of the miners' rank-and-file movements that exist all over the country, to carry out a wide reporting campaign on the Weymouth Trade Union Congress, and to publish a pamphlet giving our opinions on that Congress.

Tom Mann has issued a memorandum on the trade union question. What does this memorandum propose? It proposes a common platform on the question of united action on wages, hours, workers' democracy, united front against fascism and war, etc. It is a very simple, popular document and has been received with very big support all over the country, and we believe that we must win for support to this document lower trade union functionaries, and also the official endorsement of branches and district committees. We believe that this shall become the platform which can be put before all trade union conferences and should be popularized in preparation for the next Trade Union Congress. We believe it forges an opportunity for overcoming the decisions of the Weymouth Congress.

The commencing of the experiment of regular

meetings of active trade unionists to discuss the existing situation, get suggestions, check up on the weaknesses of the campaign and in this way strengthen it as a whole must be continued, and, finally, we must again emphasize that the success of the campaign depends upon the activity of every member in the trade unions.

We can say without any hesitation at all that under the leadership of our Party in the last two months we have been responsible for taking thousands of non-unionists into the South Wales Miners' Federation and the authority of the Party has gone up very strongly as a result. Comrade Horner plays a very big role now in South Wales and is in tremendous demand throughout the whole coal field.

But in London where the majority of the Party members are employed, only 50 per cent are in the trade unions. In Scotland it is even worse. In Scotland only 36 per cent of the Party members are in the trade unions. It is true that in Scotland we have the biggest proportion of unemployed membership of the Party. But still we will have to make a drive to get those to take out trade union membership cards.

Our Party's influence was never as great as at the present time; there was never a bigger interest in all the Party says and puts forward than at present, and if we now make a correct combination of the united front tactics in regard to the fight against fascism and war and the tactics in the elections and the mobilization of the Party membership to recruit into and build up the Party, then I am confident that we will be able to make a very big advance in all fields of our work.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED PROLETARIAN FRONT IN POLAND

By G. LENSKI

I.

THE united proletarian front is becoming a most important factor in the growth of the revolutionary forces in Poland. Despite enormous difficulties, the Communist Party of Poland has been able to obtain important successes in carrying out the united front, and has changed its tactics in accordance with the new conditions. The tactical line of the C.P.P. was determined by taking into account the new processes going on in the working class and the peculiarities of revolutionary development in Poland.

The events of June 30 in Germany had a great influence on the alignment of class forces in Poland.

The events of June scattered the legend of the monolithic character of the fascist dictatorship, and the August plebiscite upset the notion of its stability, a legend long supported by the Pilsudski government. Even the semi-official *Gazetta Polska* is now compelled to recognize the fact of the disintegration taking place in Hitler's camp and the narrowing of his mass basis.

German fascism, which overawed the Polish bourgeoisie by its scope, "suddenly" disclosed the instability of its system, torn by contradictions which had been driven inwards. The Polish bourgeoisie began to take a critical attitude towards their ideal, which had been the Hitlerite "totalitarian" State.

Both Pilsudski's followers and the National-Democrats began to repudiate the methods of the "totalitarian" regime which they had so highly praised a few months previously, a regime which, according to the editor of the *Gazetta Polska*, "turns the inevitably existing contradictions inside out". The Pilsudski government, to use the words of this newspaper, prefers the "free play of political thought" for all party groups, with the exception of the C.P. of Poland, of course, which cannot be permitted legal existence. The basic line being taken by the Pilsudski government, which wishes to preserve the *Polish variation* of the fascist dictatorship, is to maintain a monopoly of power, and restrict the "freedom of the competition of forces" in the bourgeois camp within the bounds of the hegemony of the ruling fascist party, while at the same time sharpening the terror against the revolutionary masses who are swinging to the Left headed by the Communist Party. Its originality, however, ends where the struggle against the revolutionary movement begins. Here the Pilsudski group supplements its own inventions with models taken from Hitler.

The old leader of national-democracy, Roman Dmovski, who quite recently was a trumpeter of Hitlerism in Poland, has still more "determinedly" repudiated the "totalitarian" system. "The Hitlerites have shown no creative powers, but have displayed complete bankruptcy", he wrote on August 26. ". . . we should be enemies of civilization if we saw an example for other nations in this." Dmovski displayed similar scepticism in respect to the "creative" achievements of Italian fascism.

The "self-exposure" of Hitlerism as the open dic-

tatorship of monopolist capital has helped to disillusion the Polish petty-bourgeois masses, not only in respect to the ruling fascism as personified by the Pilsudski system, but also in respect to the attempts to transfer German "national-socialism" to Polish soil.

Therefore, in trying to maintain its hold over the masses of petty bourgeoisie who are drifting to it away from Pilsudski, National-Democracy suddenly declares itself to be an "opponent" of fascism. The Pilsudski group gives assurances, however, that the "May coup barred the path to genuine fascism" * (a view shared by the Trotzkyites).

Polish fascism, which had placed great hopes in the stability of the fascist regime in Germany, has received a heavy blow. The process of the decay of Polish fascism has been accelerated. The process of the Leftward swing of the petty-bourgeois masses has been intensified. *The possibility of drawing them to the side of the revolutionary proletariat has grown.*

The most important thing is the growing resistance of the working class to the fascist offensive in such countries as France, Spain, and Poland. The beginning of the crisis of German fascism is impelling the proletariat everywhere to rise to the struggle against fascist reaction. This crisis is also undermining the prestige of the fascist Pilsudski government as the ally of the Hitler government. Polish fascism cannot be proud of its friendship with a Hitlerism which has made such an exhibition of itself. The Pilsudski clique, which wants to make Hitlerism popular among the petty bourgeoisie, is paying dearly for its rapprochement with German fascism. This friendship, which is directed against the Soviet Union, calls forth a feeling of hatred among the toilers.

A big role has been played in the rise of the anti-fascist wave in Poland by the bloody experience of the German and Austrian proletariat which has laid bare the bankruptcy of the policy of Social-Democracy which laid the path to fascism. The long years of warning by the Communists have begun rapidly to penetrate into the consciousness of the masses who follow Social-Democracy. The German example has convinced these masses that no collaboration of Social-Democracy with the bourgeoisie guarantees them against fascist vengeance, that the policy of the Welses and Bauers actually helped fascism to smash up the Social-Democratic organizations. The Social-Democratic functionaries connected with the masses have also begun to lose faith in the policy of their leaders.

Only the Trotzkyite renegades could throw the responsibility for the sabotage and disruption of the united front by the leaders of the then Social-Democratic Party of Germany on to the Communist Party. Only those who saw a force which was *in principle* irreconcilable towards fascism in the then staff of Social-Democracy can now continue to prove that this staff, after adopting the tactics of the constitutional "domestication" of Hitler and adaptation to the fascist dictatorship, would undertake a united front with the Communists. This staff has been able to impress its party and trade union functionaries with the illusion that "constitutional" fascism will preserve the organizational power of Social-Democracy, which must avoid any contact with the Communist Party.

The big change taking place in the sentiments of the working class has assisted the present scope of the united front movement. Our appeals to the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties, based on the independent work of the Communists among the non-party masses and the rank and file of Social-Democracy, have obtained a mobilizing force such as is able to overcome the sabotage of the Social-Democratic leaders.

This process has spread to the working masses in Poland as well, although in Polish conditions its speed has been less than in France and Austria. In Poland Social-Democracy has long since been squeezed out of the State apparatus, has long since been in opposition against its will, and when it comes to the masses, repudiates in words the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The mechanics of this collaboration are very complicated and are not immediately discernable to the inexperienced eye.

Nevertheless, the lessons obtained from the bitter experience of the proletariat of Germany and Austria have had their influence on the working masses in Poland. The lessons provided by Austria, the Social-Democracy of which country had always been held up as an example by the leaders of the P.P.S. and the Bund, have acted with particular force. Under the influence of the bankruptcy of the Social-Democratic ideology of the peaceful "growth into socialism" along the path of democracy, and under the influence of the bankruptcy of all attempts at peaceful cohabitation with the fascist dictatorship, the united front with the Communists has found an ever increasing number of supporters in the ranks of the Social-Democratic Parties.

At the same time the capitalist offensive in Poland has assumed terrific proportions. The capitalists estimated the symptoms of economic improvement "with great caution", and have demanded "new sacrifices" from the working class so that, at any rate, they could consolidate the transition to a peculiar kind of depression achieved at the expense of the toilers. On June 2, the central organ of the industrialists, the *Pszeglend Gospodarchi*, drew attention to the "new dynamics in internal policy" which "demand the general decisions of the govern-

* *Przelom*, July 1934.

ment" in the sphere of the further offensive on the working class.

At the end of August, Kozlovski, the new premier of the fascist government, stated the program of "general decisions", when he declared that "no return to pre-crisis relations was possible". The Pilsudski-Kozlovski government has decided to put an end to the last vestiges of the social and political gains of the working class—social insurance, the 8-hour day, the 5½ day week, wage agreements, and trade unions. The last point has in view a fusion of the trade unions with the State apparatus. The "unification" of the trade unions after the Hitlerite manner is intended to make it easier for the Polish bourgeoisie to plunder wages without ceremony, to force onto the proletariat fascist arbitration, which has been smashed by the strike wave, and to smash the growing resistance of the working masses.

The Polish bourgeoisie want by means of a concentrated blow to obtain the successes which were achieved by the German capitalists after Hitler came to power.

The Polish bourgeoisie are alarmed at the unceasing growth of the strike movement. "The strike wave is spreading wider and wider", wrote the organ of the Upper Silesian Christian Democrats, the *Polonia,* on September 4, "although the present condition of the market and unemployment should rather frighten the workers away from strikes. The workers, however, seize on such a dangerous weapon. The causes of the strikes are not only economic. . . ." Strikes are becoming more frequent against fascist license, against the privileges of the fascist trade unions, and in defense of trade union representatives dismissed from the factories. *The political strike struggle in all its variety has already spread to the masses, indissolubly combined with a growing wave of economic strikes.* And this alarms the Polish bourgeoisie most of all, since it interferes with their robber plans.

"The program of general decisions" carried out by the Pilsudski government, sharply raises the *question of uniting the forces of the proletariat in a united fighting front.*

The Social-Democratic workers in Poland have been strongly affected by the united front agreement between the Communist and Socialist Parties in France, in the country which is now the central point in the organization of unity of action against fascism in capitalist Europe. The working class members of the P.P.S. and the Bund have understood that this step is of great international importance, that the united proletarian front in France, by hindering the onward march of fascism, changes the relation of forces in favor of the entire international proletariat.

It was useless for Nedzialkovski, one of the leaders of the P.P.S., to assert as far back as the middle of June that "a common front with the Communists is impossible". A few weeks later this same Nedzialkovski made the bitter admission that his French friends "could not reject the Communist proposals owing to the seriousness of the situation in the country".

But, as we see, the situation in Poland is equally serious. This cannot be denied even by the leaders of the P.P.S. They understand that the united proletarian front in France, which the French Communists are striving to strengthen and to widen, will hasten the establishment of unity of action in other countries as well. In order to weaken the influence of this example on the Polish workers, the editor of *Rabotnik* has been prophesying all along the inevitable breakdown of the united front, giving great prominance to the resistance of the C.G.T. But the Communist Party of Poland has made clever use of the French example to penetrate deeply into the ranks of the P.P.S. and the Bund.

II.

A year and a half ago, the C.P.P. stated that it was ready to go forward with any working class organization which wanted to struggle against capitalism and fascism. The same aim was followed by a whole series of appeals containing united front proposals addressed to the leading bodies and organizations of the P.P.S. and the Bund.

In its June resolution, the C.C. of the C.P.P. emphasized that "the basis of the mass united front must be not only the economic struggles but the political struggle as well", that a way of approach to the Socialist organizations had to be found, and that a powerful united front movement had to be set up in the factories, in the reformist trade unions, in the ranks of the S.D. Party and also among the unemployed.

> "We must convince the masses", said the resolution, "that our Party is bringing about the unity of the working class in the struggle for their everyday interests, in defense of their social and political gains, and in the struggle against fascism and terror, and against the capitalist system. In our appeals and in the whole of the campaign around them, our Party takes as its basis the demands which the broad masses, irrespective of their party, understand, the demands which excite them, avoiding any action which would reduce our united front tactics in the eyes of these masses to a narrow maneuver."

Owing to the Communist Party undertaking its work in such a manner, the question of the united front has been put on the order of the day by whole organizations of the P.P.S. and the Bund. The leaders of these parties, who had previously kept silence, have finally begun to reply to the appeals of the Communists. The leaders of the P.P.S. are do-

ing everything in their power to prevent the formation of a broad united front. They are constantly claiming that unity of action is only possible within the limits of the Socialist Parties. All the proposals of the C.P.P. and the trade union opposition have been rejected on various pretexts. And on each occasion, the refusal has been accompanied by maneuvers before the masses.

For example, the central commission of the reformist trade unions, in reply to a proposal from the trade union opposition to use their joint forces to organize a general protest strike against the abolition of social insurance, promised that they would declare a strike themselves in March this year. This was the end of the matter.

The proposal of the C.P.P. to form a united front in defense of Comrade Thaelmann and all political prisoners, was met with bitter attacks by the P.P.S. on the peace policy of the Soviet Union. In a circular dated August 22, the C.C. of the P.P.S. stated that it was impossible to talk to the C.P.P. because it "represents the official Stalinite line in the Comintern, and supports the foreign policy of the Soviets, a policy of agreements even with fascist states".

Under the pressure of the lower organizations, however, the C.C. of the P.P.S. has been forced to maneuver. The reply of the Warsaw Committee of the P.P.S., which was dictated by the leaders, added spitefully that "there is no need to pick out Thaelmann specially" if "thousands of rank-and-file workers are perishing in the dungeons". But when the movement from below extended to a section of the Social-Democratic functionaries as well, the editor of the *Robotnik* began temporarily to talk about the "usefulness of joint action on the part of the Socialists and Communists for the liberation of political prisoners". In the following issue, Thaelmann's name occupied the fourth place, after Seitz, Wallish and Dubois, and the day after it disappeared from the slogans of the so-called campaign in defense of political prisoners.

The editor of *Robotnik*, having perjured himself, suddenly began to assure the workers at the end of August that the Comintern does not permit the united front everywhere, because "the Japanese danger is not yet urgent enough", and "on the other hand not every country [*i.e.*, Poland—J.L.] is of the same importance for Russia as France". A week later, the *Robotnik* wrote that the Communists are proposing the united front to the Socialists in all countries *on orders from Moscow*.

Unable to find arguments against the united front, and not possessing the determination to come out openly against it, the editor of the *Robotnik* has adopted sabotage tactics, similar to the tactics adopted by the Polish government on the question of the Eastern Pact. "Go cautiously with the united front! First of all weigh up everything for and against, and then decide", stated the central organ of the P.P.S. at the beginning of September.

The Warsaw Committee of the P.P.S. took up a similar position in its *second* reply on September 4. As can be seen, the P.P.S. workers found the first reply was unconvincing. The sabotage of the united front was too evident. And so the Warsaw district committee pretended that it had only heard a few days previously of the readiness of the C.P.P. to "put a stop to hostile attacks" during the period of joint activity, although in its appeals made during the last year our Party had constantly expressed its readiness in this connection. The Warsaw district committee also pretended that it was unaware of the repeated proposals made by the Communist Party to the Central Committee of the P.P.S. The leaders of the Warsaw organization consider it disloyal on our part to make a *simultanous* appeal to the P.P.S. workers, forgetting that it is only the pressure of the working masses that has compelled their leaders to break their long silence.

Under the pressure of our campaign in defense of social insurance and the trade unions, the Warsaw district committee promises that the P.P.S. will also carry on a campaign on these questions, but the united front with the Communists can only be formed after a lengthy period of verification of their "good faith". Proofs of good faith, is the reply of the Communists, are to be found in the unity of action of the working class, which is already being carried out in the working class districts of Warsaw in spite of the resistance of the P.P.S. leaders.

For a long time the leaders of the P.P.S. took advantage of the illegality of the C.P.P. to assure their organizations that the Polish Communists reject the well-known non-aggression pact as a "condition for an honest united front". When this maneuver was exposed by the Communists and so ceased to be effective, the P.P.S. invented a new condition, namely that there cannot be any talk of the united front so long as the Communists regard the policy of the Second International as treachery to the interests of the working class. Our reply was direct:

> "We do not for one moment intend to conceal from the workers that the policy of the Second International was and remains a policy for the salvation of the capitalist system against proletarian revolution, and the subordination not only of the historical class interests of the proletariat, but of their immediate interests to the interests of this system. We do not intend to remove ideological and political divergences from the order of the day, and we do not suggest that you do so either. We only advance such slogans, demands and forms of struggle as a platform for the united front, as can be accepted by the masses of workers, irrespective of their Party loyalty. We

are sure that in making concrete united front proposals to you we are carrying out the will of these masses. We want, together with the Social-Democratic workers (of the P.P.S. and Bund), to overcome the obstacles raised on the path towards the united front."

Thus, it must be a united front without wrangling necessity of hiding them during the period of joint activity.

These arguments of the Communists are easily understood by the Social-Democratic workers, proof of which is provided by the numerous examples of the united front in the lower organizations. The P.P.S. workers and the Communists acted in the suburbs of Warsaw in a united front against the fascist thugs, members of the National-Democratic Party. Whole organizations of the P.P.S. youth have concluded united front arrangements with the Y.C.L. Thousands of workers and hundreds of functionaries of the P.P.S. and the Bund have voted for Communist resolutions in defense of Comrade Thaelmann. They have joined in our campaign against the concentration camps introduced by the Pilsudski government.

The Party has carried on an extensive campaign for the united front on a platform of struggle against the program of the Pilsudski-Kozlovski government in a number of localities in Warsaw and Lodz, and later in the Dombrov Basin, Upper Silesia, and also in many provincial towns. It has become a common thing for Communists to speak at meetings of the district organizations of the P.P.S. Most of the P.P.S. districts in Warsaw have voted in favor of the united front. Some of the districts, after expressing their agreement with the formation of the united front, have referred our delegates to the district committee of the P.P.S. In some districts where the district leaders of the P.P.S. tried to keep our delegates out of the meetings, the district meetings became the scene of a sharp struggle, because a considerable section of the rank and file demanded that the Communists be admitted and their proposals accepted. Oppositional groups are increasing in the Warsaw localities and here and there the members of the P.P.S. are beginning to come over to the Communists. We have information of one of the area committees of the P.P.S. being dissolved in Warsaw for negotiating with the Communists.

The campaign soon spread to Lodz. In the first half of August negotiations were being carried on with four area organizations of the P.P.S. In two areas in the Lodz suburbs an agreement on the united front with the organization of joint meetings is already being operated. Under the pressure of the masses, the district committees of the P.P.S. have also been forced to surrender position after position.

The Dombrov Basin has also joined in the general campaign for the united front. Our united front appeals have reached all the P.P.S. local groups, but the subordination of the P.P.S. organizations to the line of sabotage adopted by the executive leaders has not yet been broken, because of inner-Party discipline. Most of the localities which have agreed with the proposal for the united front are still waiting for the decision of their C.C.

The proposal of the Communist Party to form a united front in defense of the trade unions, leading to the class unity of the trade union movement, has met with a broad response among the masses. The C.P.P. understands by this unity the organizational amalgamation of the trade unions on the platform of the class struggle and trade union democracy, which means primarily freedom to advocate views and proportional representation in all the leading bodies.

In its open letter, the C.C. of the C.P.P. proposed to the Social-Democratic committees and organizations that they should hold joint protest meetings in the factories, mines, on the landed estates and in the trade unions, and that if the fascists should make an attempt at the unification of the trade unions, street demonstrations and protest strikes should be organized to the point of the general strike. Simultaneously the trade union opposition proposed to the executive committees of the chief reformist trade unions, the textile workers and miners, which had experienced the severest oppression from the fascist government, to carry on a joint recruiting campaign on the program mentioned, which is to restore the faith of the masses in these trade unions and turn them into organizations of the class struggle.

The central commission of the reformist trade unions continued to sabotage the united front. Kwapinski, its chairman, referring to the services of the P.P.S. to the State, began to convince the government that the fascist "unification" of the trade unions was "not in the interests of the Polish State" which is the "common home" (of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat).

But the masses in the trade unions, taught by the experience of the German Leiparts, want to fight. They are taking the path indicated by the Communists, a path which corresponds to the interests both of the organized and unorganized workers, the path of the class unity of the trade union movement as contrasted to the demagogy of the fascists regarding "unification" which fetters the trade unions to the fascist State apparatus.

As we see, the trade union campaign of the Communists has been closely connected with the concrete development of the offensive of capital and

fascism. This explains the force of its influence on the masses who follow Social-Democracy. The Communist Party has in practice linked up recruiting into the trade unions with the concrete program of converting them into organizations of the class struggle and in defense of the trade unions which are threatened with unification.

Thus, the struggle of the opposition in the reformist unions to convert them into genuine class organizations finds support among the workers recruited into the trade unions on the basis of our program. The Left trade unions, and primarily the factory groups of the trade union opposition which concentrate their activity inside the reformist unions, have been drawn into the campaign. By operating these tactics step by step and throwing the necessary forces into the fascist trade unions, the Communist Party has called forth a mass oppositional movement in these unions for the united proletarian front, and considerably extended its revolutionary basis in them, by winning several new sections in the localities. The Communist proposals have received the votes of the P.P.S. tramway workers', municipal workers' and metal workers' trade unions, as well as of several big Bund unions in Warsaw, sections of the textile union in Lodz, the P.P.S. union in Upper Silesia (four branches) and in Dombrov division (divisional conference).

The Left opposition is becoming a serious force in the chief trade unions (with the exception of the railway union). The activity of the Left trade unions has also increased. Some of them have taken the initiative for unity. A weak point, however, is still the work in the fascist unions, although some successes have been achieved here as well, showing the possibility of creating our mass basis. This work must be given a shock character, not in words but in deeds.

The Communist Party must pay special attention to the formation of the united working class front against imperialist war, and in defense of the U.S.S.R. Every proposal for the united front must be linked up by the Communist Party with the direct danger of war against the Soviet Union by Pilsudski Poland, supported by the German and Japanese imperialists, the organizers of counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. The efforts of the Communist Party have been directed towards making the defense of the U.S.S.R. take the form of active support of the peace policy of the Soviet government, by all working class organizations. Such a way of carrying through the anti-war campaign plays a big role in Poland, where the Pilsudski government, together with the Hitler government, have directed their fire against the project for the Eastern Pact.

The leaders of the P.P.S. have played into the hands of the "native" and German imperialists by trying to besmirch the initiative of the U.S.S.R. for peace. At the end of August, the editor of the *Robotnik* cynically declared that "Moscow wants to replace the united front of the masses by pacts of friendship with the fascist States". Thus, the P.P.S. leaders have tried to disrupt the anti-war front of the working class organized by the Communists, in the program of which the Communist Party included the demand for the conclusion of the Eastern Pact and the abandonment of secret agreements with Germany.

III.

The turn made by the leaders of the C.P.P. in their everyday practical activity is the basic prerequisite for the successful development of the united front. In connection with this change, what was needed was to intensify the struggle against the "Left" sectarianism which is still rooted in the Party organizations, without weakening the struggle against those who hide the Party face and reject the independent work among the masses *which decides the success of the tactical steps we take.*

First of all, it is necessary to root out sectarianism in our approach to the Social-Democratic workers. The most important thing is the method of personal conviction, the rejection of a domineering attitude, comradely influence, convincing arguments without general phrases, and business-like criticism without abuse. The slogans and forms of struggle must correspond to the fighting moods of the masses. If the leaders of the Social-Democratic organizations reject one form of struggle, another form must be proposed to them, making it difficult for them to refuse in face of the masses. The chief thing is to begin to act together, so that the joint activity embraces the broad masses. In the course of the movement, the political consciousness of the masses must be heightened, and the Social-Democratic and non-party workers must be convinced by facts of the correctness of our program and tactics.

The attitude of the Communists to the organizational forms of the united front must also be more flexible. We, of course, are in favor of committees of action elected on the basis of the united front by all the workers in the factories and labor exchanges. But we cannot *force* the Social-Democratic organizations to set up such committees, presenting this condition as an *ultimatum* for the formation of the united front. We agree also to contact committees, while not refusing to organize united front committees elected by the masses, or trying in some other form to guarantee that the non-party and unorganized workers are able to make their voices heard. In any case, we must not weaken our work now for the formation of united front committees at *mass meetings.* As many of these committees as

possible! Let them only be active. The Lodz comrades are correctly fulfilling this task, by forming a series of united front committees in the factories.

We must pay special attention to strike committees which, thanks to the work of the Communists, have penetrated deeply among the masses and have won formal recognition in the localities even from the leaders of the reformist unions. *But strike committees in general cannot be counterposed to the trade unions.* Experience has shown that the success of strikes depends to a great extent on how the organized masses and whole trade union organizations in the localities are drawn into the struggle. Strike committees cannot deprive the trade unions of their role in the strike movement, and must not weaken our work in the trade unions which are a *big factor* in the strike struggle. Our task is to link the strike committees up closely with the trade unions, transferring the questions of the organization of the strike struggle to trade union meetings and holding the election of trade union commissions for the preparation of strikes. It is clear that if the reformist leaders act as strike-breakers, we shall oppose those leaders by the strike committees, continuing to link the latter up with the lower branches of the trade unions.

The consistent struggle of our leaders against Right and "Left" sectarian opportunism has helped towards the rapid changing of the tactics of the united front in accordance with the new conditions. But some of our active comrades have seen a narrow maneuver in our tactics, and have thought not so much of how to reach agreement with the Social-Democratic organizations for a joint struggle as of how to expose the leaders of these parties *at once*.

Hence, on more than one occasion, demands, slogans and forms of struggle which run ahead of the moods of the masses have been put forward in the form of an ultimatum, and this has made it easier for the Social-Democratic leaders to reject these demands. Hence, schematic methods of negotiation with the reformist leaders, devoid of any flexibility, and inability to replace the rejected forms of struggle by other forms, as well as inadequate concentration of the attention of the P.P.S. and Bund workers on the concrete excuses made for breaking off negotiations. Hence, the use of strong language and unfounded stereotyped formulas instead of concrete arguments capable of convincing the P.P.S. and Bund workers. This applied first and foremost to our press.

All these shortcomings were disclosed with the greatest clearness as long ago as the municipal elections held in the Spring of 1934. At these elections the Party on the whole applied the tactics of the united front quite weakly.

A typical example of the sectarian application of the united front tactics (connected, for that matter, with Right mistakes) was shown during these elections by the anti-fascist election committee, the "Workers' Unity" in the town of Zamostia. Our comrades evidently regarded the united front as a maneuver, and so proposed to the local organizations of the P.P.S. and the Bund the acceptance of a program which, in their opinion, would be absolutely inacceptable for the leaders of the P.P.S. and the Bund. When, however, these leaders accepted this program, as if deliberately, the authors of it began to discover the betrayal of the interests of the working class in it and immediately began to seek for forms of struggle with which the P.P.S. and the Bund would not agree. But here they met with a new "unpleasantness", for the leaders of the P.P.S. and the Bund, taking into account the feelings of the masses, also agreed to joint activity. A meeting of many thousands of people turned into a demonstration, which our comrades were unable to utilize because all their efforts were directed towards giving up the joint activity as soon as possible. After this, the representatives of "Workers' Unity", in fright at their own actions, declared that their united front campaign was of a Right opportunist character, because they had not been able to compel the P.P.S. and the Bund functionaries to break off negotiations.

This example is an ultra-"Left" caricature of the tactics of the united front when they are understood not as a method for the organization of the struggle together with the Social-Democratic workers with the possible participation of their leaders on the basis of common demands and slogans, but as a trap serving for the immediate exposure of these leaders. Along with the necessity for eliminating these sectarian "Leftist" tendencies and mistakes, we must maintain the greatest vigilance towards the Right opportunist distortion of the tactics of the united front. This danger was made clear in the course of the negotiations with the Bund organizations and in a few places while carrying out joint activity.

The leaders of the Communist Party have placed *the chief emphasis on independent activity among the broad masses, among the lowest organizations and the rank and file of the S.D. Party.* The C.C. of the C.P.P. warns the Party organizations against regarding the open letters and appeals to the Social-Democratic Parties as having *in themselves* miraculous powers for removing all hindrances in the path to the united front. These difficulties can only be removed by a systematic campaign in connection with these appeals, only by the clever organization of the struggle in spite of the sabotage of the reformist leaders, only by convincing the masses *in practice* of the necessity for the united front, creating in the masses confidence in the strength of the Communist Party and its ability to lead the struggle. There can

be no return to the Right opportunist, capitulatory methods of the days of the Kostrzeva-Warski group, when the Communist Party dragged at the tail of the P.P.S. and lost its political face (1923).

A characteristic feature in the work of the Communists in the localities for the formation of the united front is the *variety of the methods of contact with the lower organizations of the P.P.S.* Every appeal of the C.C. and the leaders to the S.D. Parties and to the central commission of the trade unions is taken into the local organizations of the P.P.S. and the Bund in accordance with local conditions. Delegations from the revolutionary workers advocate the Communist proposals at the district meetings of the P.P.S. Delegations from the districts and the trade union meetings are sent to the P.P.S. committees, sometimes with the participation of the revolutionary workers. Finally, it is a frequent thing, especially in Warsaw, for the revolutionary workers to take part in the sessions of the district committees of the P.P.S. when discussing the question of the united front.

Summing up the stage which has passed, we may say that, *on the whole,* the leaders of the Communist Party of Poland have brought about a big change in the practical work of the Party. Some of the achievements of the united front in Warsaw, Lodz, Upper Silesia, Zheradov, Chenstokov, etc., speak of the good work of the Communists. *The Chinese wall between the Communists and the Social-Democratic workers is breaking down.* A method of approach to the Social-Democratic organizations has been found. Connections have been organized with their active workers. The initiative of the Communists has found support in a number of district committees of the P.P.S. and the Bund. Some of the lower organizations of these parties have entered the united front with the Communist organizations in spite of prohibition from above.

These partial successes of the Communist Party enrage the leaders of the P.P.S. "The committees cannot allow Communists to speak at district meetings", says the circular mentioned above, "thus causing unrest in the ranks of our sympathizers. . . ." (Why only sympathizers?—J.L.) "Agreements must be made only with the knowledge and consent of the C.C. and not behind its back as the Communists do when they approach our committees, *which must not enter into negotiations under any circumstances.*" The successes of the Communists in the lower organizations of the P.P.S. are still more definitely confirmed by Nedzialkovski, who, as one of the preliminary conditions for a united front on the French model, put forward the demand that the Communists stop acting from below (*Robotnik,* September 11). But if there had not been this action from below, Nedzialkovski would not even have thought it necessary to reply to the Communists.

A model of the united front in the localities was provided by the workers of Zheradov, where, in spite of the evasive reply of the P.P.S. leaders, an anti-fascist committee was elected at a large meeting, and a delegation appointed which went to the German Consulate with the demand for the release of Comrade Thaelmann. According to the bourgeois press, several hundred workers holding various views signed the resolution which was presented to the Consul.

The Communists, however, have not yet succeeded in overcoming the resistance among the middle functionaries, in the district committees of the P.P.S. It is very noteworthy that these committees cannot, and some of them do not, want to act against our initiative. But in most cases they refer us to the C.C. of the P.P.S., with the promise of their support.

There can be no doubt that discipline in the P.P.S. is still stronger than in the Socialist Party of France, and the pressure exerted by the central leaders on the local committees is also stronger. In its organizational structure, the P.P.S. is more firmly built than many other Social-Democratic Parties. It was formed under the influence of and after the long school of illegality in the former Tsarist Poland and the Pilsudski military treatment of later years. A decisive role was played by the necessity for opposing a firm centralized apparatus to the growing Communist Party. The privilege of legality is not sufficient, because illegal Communism in Poland has thrust its roots deeper then in many "parliamentary democratic" countries. Finally, the leaders of the P.P.S. use the illegality of the Communist Party as a scarecrow to make it easier to sabotage the united front.

All the more must our tactics be distinguished by still greater flexibility. All the greater must be the stubbornness with which the Communists convince the Social-Democratic workers and functionaries that the united front is now a life and death question for the working class. All the nearer must we approach the Social-Democratic organizations in the factories and districts, the local committees and the trade union executive, and make them aware of every open letter issued by the Communist Party.

The united front with the Bund organizations must be utilized to exert extensive influence on the P.P.S. organizations. It should always be remembered that the so-called non-aggression pacts between the organizations which have undertaken joint struggle means an attack on those leaders who disrupt and sabotage the united front.

The extent of the influence of the Communist Party of Poland on the toiling masses of the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie depends on the scope with which it brings about the united proletarian front. Fascism is anxious to break through the

revolutionary front of the toilers, to set the village poor against the city workers, and wishes to sow dissensions between the revolutionary proletariat and the exploited peasants with the help of the "populists". Fearing new explosions in the ruined and starving villages, the Pilsudski government is advocating a rapprochement with the "common people" and is advancing a false program for the revision of the indebtedness of the peasants. This well-thought-out maneuver is intended to make it easier for the bourgeoisie to undertake a new offensive against the working class, and to deprive it of allies in the approaching struggles for power.

The united proletarian front will help to strengthen the struggle of the millions of peasants, oppressed peoples and the impoverished petty bourgeoisie, against monopolist capital, fascism and imperialism. The united proletarian front creates wide possibilities for drawing these masses into the struggle alongside the proletariat. The Communist Party must carry the methods of the united front into the villages, and display readiness to struggle jointly with every organization of the poor and middle peasants for the everyday interests of the toiling peasants.

The united proletarian front will increase the radicalization of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and will accelerate the transition of some of them to the side of the revolutionary proletariat. This transition is delayed by the social and political demagogy of the old and young National-Democrats, who have very much widened their basis among those strata of the petty bourgeoisie who are disillusioned with Pilsudski. This is the weakest place in the development of the revolutionary movement.

In short, the united fighting front of the workers means a big change in the relationship of forces in favor of the revolutionary proletariat, one of the chief tasks facing which is to isolate the bourgeoisie from the toiling petty-bourgeois masses.

In carrying out the revolutionary unity of action of the proletariat, the Communist Party clearly raises the question of power, a question closely connected with that of "organizational amalgamation" or "organic unity" (as the Socialist Party of France usually formulated it), which is given great prominence by Social-Democracy *as an offset to the united front*. The Communist Party exposes the slogan of the "dictatorship of the revolutionary classes" which was advanced at the last Congress of the P.P.S. as a contrast to the genuine dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union.

The nature of this slogan as a maneuver was disclosed not long ago by the editor of the *Robotnik*, who stated that "the slogan of dictatorship does not base its calculations on the problems and struggles of the present day", and therefore it cannot be considered as the "orientation of socialism" or "something for everyday propaganda", and moreover, "it is better for dictatorship itself if less is said about it", and still better—"it should be avoided at all costs".

Like Adler, the leaders of the P.P.S. are in favor of "coordinating the methods of revolution and reform" in the Second International, for, as Adler assures us, "the two methods do not contradict but supplement one another". Thus, the method of reformism or collaboration with the bourgeoisie continues to remain in force. This is why the P.P.S. leaders have even pigeonholed their lying slogan of the "dictatorship of the revolutionary classes".

In reply to the attempts to galvanize the Second International under these slogans, the Communists declare that:

> "The organizational unity of the proletariat to which the united fighting front leads, is unity achieved for the struggle for power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the Soviet government of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies."

An example of such a dictatorship is the U.S.S.R. —the only bulwark of the international revolutionary movement. Only the U.S.S.R. ensures and carries out the liquidation of capitalism and the transition to classless socialist society. Therefore the defense of the U.S.S.R. is a duty of honor for every worker and for every toiler.

There is not and cannot be any other path to the dictatorship of the proletariat than the armed uprising of the workers, peasants and soldiers.

There is not and cannot be any other organization expressing the international revolutionary unity of the proletariat than the Communist International.

A BOURGEOIS WORK ON THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

(Professor Lewis L. Lorwin, *The American Federation of Labor—History, Policies and Prospects.* Published by the Brookings Institute, Washington, D. C.)

By I. MINGULIN

THIS is the first up-to-date comprehensive work on the history of the American Federation of Labor, organized some fifty years ago. Lorwin's book covers 600 pages. It contains a wealth of carefully sifted and detailed material. Lorwin is pretty well known in the scientific world in the U.S.A. He is a collaborator of the Brookings Institute, a publicist, has written several books on economic questions and occasionally publishes articles in *Current History,* a serious American bourgeois monthly. In 1918-19, Prof. Lorwin was a collaborator in the Bureau of Labor Politics formed by President Wilson during the war to regulate relations between labor and capital, in other words, to subordinate the workers to the bourgeoisie. In 1931, Lorwin took part in the international conference on planning at Amsterdam. The author is acquainted with the A. F. of L. not only through books, but also through practical work.

In the beginning of his work, Lorwin offers his thanks to William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, for permission to use the records in the archives of the American Federation of Labor, the personal correspondence of the deceased, life-long president of the A. F. of L., Samuel Gompers, the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., and other unpublished manuscripts. The author also made use of the minutes of the War Labor Policies Board and the unpublished work of Leo Wolman, an authoritative specialist on the labor problems and "labor policies". This work was drawn up by Wolman for the Committee on Recent Social Trends in the U.S.A., founded by Hoover in 1932, which has published a report in several volumes. Lorwin further made use of the collaboration and advice of several "learned" and scientific authorities on the questions involved in this book.

We can see from the preface to the book, written by the Director of the Institute, E. Nourse, that the Brookings Institute and the author understand the whole significance of the question of the A. F. of L. We see in the preface that the author,

> ". . . views the American Federation of Labor not as a mere intra-mural force in factory or shop limiting itself to industrial questions, but as something much more far-reaching, shaping and molding many other human relations which are the very essence of our individual and social life."

Translated into simple language, these nebulous, professorial phrases mean that the A. F. of L. plays a very prominent *political* role in the class struggle in the U.S.A., by acting on behalf of the bourgeoisie.

This approach to the importance of the A. F. of L. immediately gives us a certain guarantee that we shall be dealing with a serious interpretation of the question of the American Federation of Labor, and demands that we on our side should give it careful attention, especially since the question is being interpreted by a bourgeois professor.

Of course, Lorwin's work, as that of a bourgeois professor, supports a definite policy of the bourgeoisie, as the author quite frankly admits. On the one hand, the book gives concrete material on the development and activities of the A. F. of L. On the other hand, it shows the relation of that wing of the bourgeoisie towards the A. F. of L. whose influence plays quite an important role in directing the policy of the Roosevelt Government of bringing the A. F. of L. closer to the State apparatus.

Lorwin's work consists of five sections and a supplement. The first four parts are historical. The author divides the history of the A. F. of L. into four periods: that of the foundation and molding (1864-1898); the period of the A. F. of L.'s expansion into a real national organization (1899-1914); the world war and early post-war years; the period of "prosperity" and crisis (1925-1933). The fifth section is concerned with the current policies, problems and prospects of the A. F. of L. The two supplements contain statistics and a characterization of the position of individual trade unions of the A. F. of L.

The labor movement in the U.S.A. began to develop as a mass movement during and after the Civil War. The decades of the nineteenth century which followed the Civil War recorded some glorious pages in the history of the labor movement in the U.S.A. It was just at this period that the First International found refuge in America. But the American proletariat did not manage to build up a real Labor Party at that time, and the approaching epoch of imperialism broke off the development of the labor movement in that direction. This predetermined the peculiar

character of the evolution of the trade union organizations in the U.S.A., and the lack of a broad mass labor party dependent upon the trade unions as was the case in Germany, England, France and in other countries. There were no really big nation-wide tasks in connection with the bourgeois-democratic revolution facing the working class of the U.S.A.: a rapid development of capitalism was taking place, which made it possible to bring the surplus labor power into industry, and the influx of immigration satisfied the growing demand for cheap labor power. As a result of all this, the trade union organizations became the chief form of organization of the workers of the U.S.A., and the upper strata of the working class became the chief social layer of the trade unions. In speaking of "the main features of the Anglo-American labor movement" during the last 30 years of the nineteenth century, Lenin pointed out that:

> "These features are the absence of any sort of big, nation-wide *democratic* problems facing the proletariat, the complete subjection of the proletariat to bourgeois policy, sectarian isolation of a few, a handful of the socialists from the proletariat." (*Works*, Vol. XI., p. 168, Russian Edition.)

All this, together with the presence of a large number of immigrant workers, the drifting composition of the proletariat, the predominance of monopolies in the big industrial centers, led to the trade union organizations which were created by the workers (the A. F. of L. unions)—in many cases with the direct support of the employers—falling into the hands of the conservative trade union bureaucracy, who did their utmost to prevent any expression of the militant mood of the workers and to stop the trade unions from being converted into truly mass organizations. But this resulted only as the outcome of a prolonged, complicated, uneven process of development of the A. F. of L. of inner struggle and conflicts with other labor organizations. It is possible that in no other country did the labor movement experience such acute internal and group conflicts as in the U.S.A. These conflicts seldom were of a clearly defined principled character, but they always expressed definite political tendencies.

The period of the organizational formation of the A. F. of L. (1881-1898), was one of the most acute struggle between the A. F. of L. and other labor organizations. It would be useful first of all to give a characterization of the general trend of the struggle.

It is especially in the 70's that the mighty activities of the workers, especially the extensive strike movement of the railwaymen, served as an impetus to the organization of the American working class. In December, 1877, the Socialist Labor Party was formed, which subsequently degenerated into a little sect. The "Knights of Labor", founded in 1869, became a national movement by 1878. On November 15, 1881, the American Federation of Labor was founded at a conference in Pittsburgh.

The two decades that followed were fraught with struggle between the A. F. of L. on the one hand, and the first two organizations on the other—a struggle that was extremely acute (although periodical and spontaneous)—until one organization, the Knights of Labor, left the arena once and for all, and the other—the Socialist Labor Party—degenerated into a mere sect, which no longer played any political role at all. Emphasizing the mass character of the Knights of Labor, Engels, while highly esteeming the initiative of the working masses, at the same time pointed out that the Knights of Labor were "raw material" distinguished for their indefinite and amorphous political and organizational character:

> "The Knights of Labor are the first national organization created by the American working class as a whole; whatever be their origin and history, whatever their shortcomings and little absurdities, whatever their platform and their constitution, here they are, the work of practically the whole class of American wage workers, the only national bond that holds them together, that makes their strength felt to themselves not less than to their enemies, and that fills them with the proud hope of future victories."

The persecutions of the government and the attacks of the leaders of the A. F. of L. showered down upon the Knights of Labor. Having no definite program, no organization, no experienced leaders, being neither a party, nor a trade union, but something half-way between, as Engels said, the Knights of Labor had no future before them. The Socialist Labor Party, the only labor party of that period, was not a force that could, basing itself upon the Knights of Labor, create a strong working class political party and a strong class trade union movement. Engels wrote that this is a party only in name:

> "This section is a party but in name, for nowhere in America has it, up to now, been able actually to take its stand as a political party. It is, moreover, to a certain extent foreign to America, having until lately been made up almost exclusively of German immigrants, using their own language and for the most part little conversant with the common language of the country."

Of course, the emigrant nature of the Socialist Party would still not have been the chief trouble, had the party's policy been a correct one. But it conducted a sectarian policy and could not join in with the mass labor movement.

At the beginning of the new century, another or-

ganization came upon the scene, which declared war upon the A. F. of L.—the Industrial Workers of the World. This organization came upon the scene at another period, the period of the progressive decay of capitalism—imperialism. For some time it drew vast masses of the working class into the revolutionary movement. But the anarcho-syndicalist policy of the I.W.W. hindered it from becoming a revolutionary organization. And when the imperialist policy of the U.S. government led to the country entering the first imperialist war on the side of the Entente, the A. F. of L. was victorious in the dual, and there now remain only miserable, degenerate chips of the old organization of the I.W.W.

The perod of the general crisis of capitalism has led to an unprecedented sharpening of the class struggle and has clearly raised the question of two currents in the working class movement: one—the irreconcilable class struggle against capitalism, on behalf of the proletarian revolution, for the emancipation of the working class. And the second current, collaboration and compromise with the bourgeoisie, *i.e.*, the struggle to maintain capitalism, against proletarian revolution, for further economic and political enslavement of the working class. The Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union movement which supports it have grown up inside and outside the A. F. of L. Thus, American imperialism, in spite of all its might and its merciless repression of the revolutionary activities of the working class, has never been able to mantain not only a complete, but even anything like a prolonged, victory over the working class, in the sense of forcing them to give up their revolutionary struggle, or forcing the revolutionary vanguard to subordinate itself to the agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class—the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and the social-reformist leaders.

The whole policy of the bourgeoisie and of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy is now directed towards once more trying to prevent the building up of a mass revolutionary proletarian party, the Communist Party, and of the revolutionary trade union movement. And Lorwin's book also serves the same purpose. Will they succeed in this?

We have already pointed out that the A. F. of L. grew up on the crest of the wave of the rising working class movement. In September, 1864, at the Louisville (Kentucky) conference, the International Industrial Assembly of North America was formed, which was not, however, long-lived. One of the articles of its constitution provided for a general strike fund. In the subsequent period, several attempts at organizing trade unions led to the final creation of the A. F. of L.

At the Detroit Convention of the A. F. of L. in 1890, a struggle broke out in favor of including the Socialist Labor Party in the A. F. of L. Several unions supported the demand of the S.L.P. But the majority were against. In 1893, when as a result of the crisis the desire for independent political action increased among the working masses, Thomas Morgan, the secretary of the Machinists' Union, who had previously headed the radical movement inside the A. F. of L., in his program of eleven points, introduced at the Chicago Convention of the A. F. of L., demanded the formation of an independent labor party and the collective ownership by the people of all the means of production. After discussion the convention decided by a vote of 2,244 to 67 to submit the resolution to the unions, with the request that they instruct their delegates to the 1894 convention.

At this convention Gompers was elected president of the A. F. of L., by a majority of 1,314 votes against 1,222.

At the 1894 convention, the Morgan program was voted down again, but only because the delegates to the convention voted against the instructions of the unions they represented.

At this convention, however, Gompers' candidature as president of the A. F. of L. was turned down—the only time in the whole of the history of the A. F. of L.

At the following convention in 1895, Gompers was once more elected by a majority of only 18 votes. However, the convention passed a decision that "party politics shall have no place in the conventions, of the A. F. of L." From this time onwards, the power of the bureaucracy in the A. F. of L. unions was considerably increased. At the 1896 convention, Gompers was unanimously elected president of the Federation.

Throughout the whole of the struggle of the organizations, factions and groupings in the labor movement of the U.S.A., there was to be seen a struggle of two main currents—the revolutionary and the opportunist, although it was not always open and consistent. The most barefaced opportunism was concentrated among the leaders of the A. F. of L. The revolutionary tendencies, right until the end of the world imperialist war and the formation of the Communist Party, could not take shape as a consistent Marxist current and organization.

It is curious to note that the A. F. of L. was formed as an organization parallel to the Order of the Knights of Labor, which grew up 13 years earlier than the A. F. of L. Because of the pressure from the Knights of Labor, the A. F. of L. did not, as Gompers had wanted it to do from the very beginning, include in its rules the provision which did not permit of unskilled workers joining the ranks of the A. F. of L.

In the first years of the existence of the two or-

ganizations, success was clearly on the side of the Order of the Knights of Labor. The upsurge of the working class movement in the eighties, especially in connection with the crisis of 1894-1896, drew the workers towards the Order as a militant, mass organization which had been successful in strikes, while the A. F. of L. was a new, more narrow organization.

Sympathy towards the Order grew among skilled workers as well. Many of the leaders of the A. F. of L. and even Gompers himself were members of the Order. Many of the A. F. of L. unions belonged to the Order. In general the relations existing between the Order and the A. F. of L. were not of a hostile character, despite the fact that they were actually competing organizations. And this continued till 1895. From that time on there began a desperate struggle between the two organizations.

In the beginning of the eighties, when the influence of the A. F. of L. had almost completely broken down, its leaders began a campaign for a general strike and the eight-hour working day. Later on, when the movement assumed mass proportions, the same leaders betrayed it. But they had already managed to restore their lost influence and to create a basis for the results of the 1896 convention. Actually, the A. F. of L. in its present form took shape in 1886, when it declared war upon radicalism in the labor movement, and upon the Order of the Knights of Labor which at that time represented a Left tendency. Of course, in the early years, with the masses becoming radicalized, the founders of the A. F. of L. did not manage to split the skilled and unskilled workers. But they managed this later, when the development of imperialism strengthened the labor aristocracy and the official leaders of the A. F. of L. became the true servants of victorious imperialism.

It is interesting, on the concrete example of Gompers, to trace the movement of the upper strata of the labor aristocracy under the influence of imperialism. In the epoch of industrial capitalism they called themselves socialists and internationalists. Comrade Foster also points this out in his book on the American trade union bureaucracy. R. Commons, in his *History of Labor in the United States*, gives a letter written by Sam Gompers to the *National Labor Tribune* in 1875, which is very interesting from this standpoint:

> "All political action," wrote Gompers, "should primarily be subordinated to the great social aim which takes precedence, *viz.*, the economic emancipation of the working class. . . . Many persons hostile to the cause of the proletariat have tried to blacken the Left labor movement, assuring us that it was either French, German or Russian; but there is not a shadow of truth in all that. . . ."

And even 12 years later, in 1887, in the heat of the struggle between the A. F. of L. and the Knights of Labor, Gompers wrote:

> "I share the belief of the most advanced thinkers in the final aim, including the abolition of the system of wage labor."

It is even said that Gompers learned the German language in order to read Marx's *Capital*. And in Gompers' autobiography, *Seventy Years of Life and Activity*, we find the following note: "I wrote a letter to Fred Engels, whom I consider a friend of the labor movement". How much demagogy there is in these letters it is difficult to say. But one thing is without doubt, that the evolution of social-reformism towards barefaced social-imperialism in the trade-union movement, which took place under the influence of mighty American imperialism, is reflected as in a mirror in the upper strata of the A. F. of L.

The purely trade unionist and non-political nature of the trade unions in the U.S.A. was also a reaction against the attempts of the petty-bourgeois elements from the Right and the "Left" to use the working class for their own purposes, ignoring their trade union organizations and the defense of their daily interests, which attempts were being suppressed by the development of capitalism itself. Another reaction against these attempts was, to a certain extent, the current in favor of neutralizing the trade unions, their hostile attitude to the idea of a political party. This is not only typical of the U.S.A. But this neutrality almost immediately expressed itself, in the A. F. of L., in a negative attitude towards the creation of a political party of the working class, and, in the long run, developed into open support of the bourgeois political parties.

For obvious reasons Lorwin does not deal with these points. For him it is important to present the A. F. of L. historically as a consistently trade unionist organization. Hence the conclusion should follow logically that the next stage in the history of the A. F. of L. should be open collaboration with the capitalist State.

All that Lenin wrote about the trade unions in his *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder* especially applies to the history of the development of the A. F. of L.:

> "The trade unions were a gigantic progress of the working class in the beginning of capitalism, being a transition from the scatteredness and helplessness of the workers to the *beginnings* of class organization. When a *higher* form of class organization of the proletarians emerged, *the revolutionary party of the proletariat* . . . then the trade unions inevitably began to display *certain* reactionary features, some sectarian narrowness, some leanings towards aloofness from politics, some inertness, etc."

This reactionary tendency, inertness, sectarian narrowness, which leads to subordinating the working class to bourgeois ideology, was displayed more and more strongly and in more concentrated form by the A. F. of L., when it came out against all attempts to make the trade unions militant and independent as class organizations.

Not without reason does Lorwin, the bourgeois historian, write in a most sympathetic strain, that difficult times came for the A. F. of L. in the years of depression and crisis, and on the contrary, the years of the rise of capitalism were years of prosperity for the A. F. of L. as well. In noting this fact, Lorwin remains silent on the question which naturally arises in the mind of the reader: why did the leaders of the A. F. of L. fare so well in the years of capitalist prosperity, and why were the years when capitalism was in difficulties, like 1892-1894, also difficult for the A. F. of L. leaders? Lorwin, of course, does not criticize the policy of trade unionism from the viewpoint of proletariat. But at times he rises above the leaders of the A. F. of L. and shows up their inconsistency, and even indecision, in defending the interests of the A. F. of L. as a trade union organization. In speaking of the collaboration of the leaders of the A. F. of L. with the National Civic Federation, Lorwin is capable of writing about a "certain similarity" between this National Federation and the Anti-Union Employers' Association—with the difference alone that the first was working with more subtle methods. The "settlement" of strikes at that time, when the National Civic Federation could manage it, playing as it were the role of amateur N.R.A., was often "disastrous to unionism", just when settlements called forth the greatest applause (p. 84).

Lorwin emphasizes the fact that there was a time when the leaders of the A. F. of L. were against State interference in the relations between the trade unions and owners, against compulsory arbitration, etc. Lorwin needed this point in order to show that life itself has put forward the need for interference of this kind, and the leaders of the A. F. of L. subsequently only went to meet the demands of life when they changed their position and began more and more to turn to open collaboration with the bourgeois State. Lorwin criticizes the A. F. of L. from the viewpoint of a liberal bourgeois, who now advocates capitalist "planning" and by all kinds of measures preparing the ground for the process of fascization. Therefore, he says, State interference in the relations between labor and capital is also necessary in order to avoid "labor troubles", "radical thoughts", etc., since "experience with American industry did not indicate that employers, if left alone, would be concerned about the welfare of the workers" (p. 78).

In order to characterize the position taken up by Lorwin, one must also deal with the social forces which he sees behind the ideology and policy of the Federation. "The evolution of unionism pure and simple between 1896 and 1898", writes Lorwin, "must be explained on the basis of the interests and viewpoints of the skilled worker". There is no doubt at all that the labor aristocracy was recruited first and foremost from among the skilled workers. There is no doubt that this strata was first and foremost the caterer to pure trade unionism. But can we understand the essence of pure trade unionism if we do not reveal the *bourgeois* ideology of the upper strata of the working class which has been bought over by imperialist profits?

The years 1898-1914 were a period of growth of the A. F. of L. (its membership grew from 278,000 members in 1898 to 1,676,200 in 1904), when it became more than ever imbued with imperialist ideology. However, all this was concomitant with the struggle inside the A. F. of L. against the maneuvers of the leaders, which at times took on an extremely acute character. As a mass organization, where the workers were not divided from the rest of the toiling masses by a Chinese wall, the A. F. of L. could not but reflect, in its development, all the changes which took place in the working class, all the ups and downs of its struggles. These conflicts inside the A. F. of L. became particularly acute during the years of the upsurge of the working class movement, during the years when capitalism was in difficulties. The mood of the working masses in the trade unions was extremely militant (the strikes of the steel and mine workers). The leaders of the A. F. of L., on the contrary, sought to obtain peaceful relations with the employers.

Together with the growth of the A. F. of L. the internal struggle between the individual unions for "spheres of influence", the so-called "jurisdictional disputes", *i.e.*, quarrels between different craft unions as to which union one or the other group of workers should belong to, increased still further. From the year 1899 these frictions began almost to be the center of the internal life of the A. F. of L. From that time onwards, and especially in the periods of prosperity, the federal locals appear upon the scene, which now occupy such an important position in the automobile, the rubber, and other branches of industry.

At the same time, socialist tendencies increased among the workers of the A. F. of L. The Socialist Party, organized in 1901, introduced a resolution of a socialist nature at the A. F. of L. convention in 1902. This resolution was turned down by an extremely small majority (4,899 against 4,171).

During this period a new struggle was begun against the A. F. of L. by the Western Federation

of Miners, which formed the American Labor Union in 1902. In June, 1905, the Western Federation together with other Left elements at the Chicago Convention, created a new trade union organization, the "Industrial Workers of the World", which became one of the centers of gravity of the radicalizing workers. The struggle of the Left elements met with sympathy in the ranks of the A. F. of L. as well, where the growth of the unions had led to new masses of the working class being drawn into their ranks. And Lorwin correctly records that "while still essentially an organization of skilled workers, the Federation also had a considerable element of semi-skilled workers, and a growing number of unskilled" (p. 126). The number of regular dues-paying members of the A. F. of L. amounted to 2,020,671 before the War. It is also important to note that the A. F. of L. in the legislative sphere was compelled, under the pressure of the masses, to put forward several demands which were defended by the Socialists.

"To many observers the Federation seemed on the threshold of a new era of development when the World War broke," says Lorwin (p. 127). Of course, this assertion is very exaggerated. With all its big differences from the European mass reformist trade unions (not to mention such extensively well-known phenomena in the A. F. of L. as the dishonesty of its trade-union officials, the wide use of bandit methods, corruption and high ministerial salaries), the A. F. of L. was a reformist, trade-union organization, which took on a more or less mass form at different periods. The internal struggle in the A. F. of L. went along the same lines: concerning the difference of interests between the masses and the leaders.

The mistake which the Knights of Labor and the Socialist Party and the Industrial Workers of the World made was not, of course, their keen criticism of the leaders of the A. F. of L., and the struggle they waged against their opportunism, but the fact that they did not sufficiently clearly see the difference between the mass of members and the leaders of the A. F. of L. Hence all these Left organizations arrived not only at the tactics of dual unionism, but also to giving up the work in the A. F. of L., and this led to the isolation from the masses organized in the A. F. of L. and thus to the victory of the A. F. of L. leadership, itself. The reason for the defeat, in other words, was that all these tendencies were unable to understand, in a Leninist manner, the connection between opportunism and imperialism. They were unable to draw up the Marxist tactics towards the reformist trade-union organizations. They were not able to feel their way to the masses in the A. F. of L.

Lorwin makes many interesting confessions in analyzing the activities of the A. F. of L. during the war. For example, he says:

> "The government's concessions to organized labor came piecemeal and gradually, only as serious difficulties arose in an industry. And, as a rule, the government machinery worked best in plants and industries in which strong unions had existed before the outbreak of the war" (pp. 170-171).

And this is understandable, since the leaders of the A. F. of L. used all the force of their influence and apparatus to ensure that no strikes of workers or any other activities against the bourgeoisie should take place. Better proof of the manner in which the A. F. of L. served the imperialist war than these words of Lorwin is not required. Speaking of certain of the partial "gains" of the workers during the war, Lorwin is compelled to recognize, in spite of the theory of collaboration between the trade unions and the capitalist State, that collaboration of this kind was only to the disadvantage of the workers.

> "These gains," says he, ". . . do not indicate that labor exploited its unusual war opportunities to the full. They show that organized labor was prevented to some extent from making as good a bargain as it might have through unregulated action. The restraining influence was exercised by leadership, public opinion, and government pressure" (p. 171).

During the War and immediately after it the membership of the A. F. of L. doubled, and in 1920 it had increased to 4,078,740 members. The influx of the new mass of workers increased the militant character of the A. F. of L. unions. The year 1919 has remained unsurpassed in the extent of strike waves in the U.S.A., which took on an unusually menacing form for the bourgeoisie. The opposition movement in the A. F. of L. was of a mass character for several years after the war. The trade union centers for some time were places where the radical elements concentrated. The role and significance of the central labor councils are very great in mass strikes even today (Toledo, San Francisco and others), where the leaders of the A. F. of L., backed up by the trade union councils, are able to fight against the attempts of the workers to organize general strikes. Meanwhile, as experience has shown, the revolutionary elements, if systematic work is done, can and could always penetrate into these centers and influence their work. At the 1919 convention, the radical elements defeated the E.C. of the A. F. of L. on several points. In 1924, the E.C. supported the candidature of LaFollette. At the same time the E.C., in pursuing its policy of expulsions, splitting the trade unions, etc., increased its struggle

against the radical elements, and first and foremost against the Communists.

Lorwin's remarks on the relations between the A. F. of L. and the Communists during the last ten years are also not without interest. He points out that the A. F. of L. was recognized by the owners in the South after it had "held out promise of undoing the Communists" (p. 269). Lorwin says further that the small results of the Communists in the trade-union work were due not so much to the actions of the A. F. of L leaders, as to the methods of work of the Communists.

> "Interested in large and spectacular mass movements, they found it much easier to arouse discontented workers than to hold them in permanent economic organizations. Their preparations for strikes were hasty, their leadership faulty. Besides, despite their attacks on the 'bureaucracy' of the A. F. of L. they showed but little regard for democratic methods" (p. 270).

We must carefully listen to these utterances from a hostile camp because it shows how the bourgeoisie make use of our real weaknesses in order to distort them and direct them in the fight against Communism.

With the development of the economic crisis, the dissatisfaction of the masses inside and outside the A. F. of L. is growing.

The A. F. of L. Executive Council in 1932 passed a resolution on unemployment insurance, thus changing its traditional policy on this question, as Lorwin admits, "under the combined pressure from its own local unions, from the radical elements in and outside its ranks" (p. 294).

Finally, the A. F. of L. made a proposal on the need for planning and forming a national economic council. The policy of the N.R.A., which is being pursued by Roosevelt, was quite acceptable to the leaders of the A. F. of L. On this question the leaders of the A. F. of L. have joined the mass chorus of international Social-Democracy which greeted Roosevelt's N.R.A. as a policy in the spirit of "socialism" or at any rate in the direction towards it.

The growth of the A. F. of L., which has come as a result of the influx of new strata of the workers into its unions, is increasing its character as a mass trade-union organization. How far the leaders of the A. F. of L., with the assistance of the bourgeoisie, will be able to prevent the masses that have joined the A. F. of L. from becoming revolutionized, all depends upon the mood of the workers and upon the ability of the Communists to organize the workers for the struggle for their daily interests, for their trade-union rights, for electing loyal workers as leaders in official posts in the unions, capable of organizing the defense of the workers' interests. This first and foremost depends on the close proximity of the Communist Party to the trade unions, upon an unswerving struggle for the united front and trade union unity. The Communists are armed with the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism. The Communists will not repeat the mistakes of the preceding radical adversaries of the A. F. of L. by isolating themselves from the rank-and-file masses in the A. F. of L. unions.

The A. F. of L. unions were created by the workers and must serve the interests of the working class —that, in short, is the position of the Communists. Lorwin himself, in the latter part of his book, is compelled to admit that the Communists put for ward demands that are in the interests of the work ers; the leaders of the A. F. of L. under pressure of the masses are compelled to accept these demands, but they accept them only in words and try their utmost to avoid treading on the toes of the bourgeoisie. We know that the Communists have always had and still have defects in their work, but the Communists admit these defects and overcome them.

In conclusion Lorwin points out that the experience of the last ten years has gradually undermined the "philosophy" of the A. F. of L., and the crisis aimed the final blow at it. By this philosophy, Lorwin means the sectarian narrowness of the policy and practice of the A. F. of L. and its opposition to the open interference of the State in trade-union affairs.

> "Summing up, the course of the Federation and of the American labor movement in the near future will be shaped by the struggle of three tendencies. One will be the efforts of employers to eliminate unionism and to develop . . . company unions. . . . However, as no system of employed representation seems able to provide an adequate substitute for unionism, the second tendency will be a continued effort on the part of the workers to revive and extend the present form of trade unionism. But as the difficulties in the path of unionism became aggravated by economic conditions, the third tendency towards a governmentally aided unionism will become stronger and assert itself against the other two" (p. 463).

In the September issue of *Current History, i.e.*, after the introduction of the N.R.A., Lorwin explains the tasks of the A. F. of L. from the viewpoint of the third tendency. The struggle of these three tendencies has now increased. The working class, with its desire for organization, has turned first and foremost to the trade unions of the A. F. of L., not out of confidence in Green, etc., but because these workers would like to find a defender of their daily interests against capital. The Roosevelt government (with the assistance of elements like Lorwin), is trying to make its policy combine support from the American Federation of

Labor, and support from the company unions.

The most reactionary wing of the bourgeoisie wants no trade unions but company unions. The working class must first of all smash the attempt of the bourgeoisie to deprive them of trade union organizations and drive them into company unions. In their conflicts, the Communists will take the line of strengthening the mass organizations and turning them from the policy of class peace—to which the local leaders are drawing them—on to the road of a consistent class struggle against the bourgeoisie and its State. This will be the struggle to make the union organizations into organs really defending the workers' interests and which will be capable of smashing the policy of company unionism. In the process of this struggle the American workers, under the guidance of the Communists, will offer resistance to the attempts to graft the trade unions on to the capitalist State, which attempts are akin to the policy of the company unions.

A REVIEW OF THE AMERICAN "PARTY ORGANIZER"

SOME BASIC PROBLEMS OF THE PARTY AS REFLECTED AND TREATED IN THE *PARTY ORGANIZER* DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY-AUGUST, 1934

By E. GREEN

THE *Party Organizer,* a monthly magazine designed to deal with specific political-organizational problems of the Party, is issued monthly by the C.C. of the C.P.U.S.A. With rare exceptions, the *Party Organizer* is now coming out regularly practically every month. The existence of the *Party Organizer* and its regular appearance are certainly an achievement for the C.P.U.S.A.

The Eighth Convention of the Party, held last April, has brought to light a number of achievements of the C.P.U.S.A. since its Seventh Convention: It has tripled the membership; it has made some real advance in improving the inner life of the Party, both politically and in the respect of developing new leading cadres; some progress in concentration, in shop work, on the trade union field, etc. But the Convention again and again stressed that, notwithstanding these achievements, concentration and shop work, Party building, trade union work, etc., *are the very problems* that are facing our Party in the sharpest form at the present time.

Has the *Party Organizer,* in the past six months, brought forward the central political-organizational tasks confronting the Party? How has it helped to solve these problems? How has the *Party Organizer* helped the lower organizations of the Party to carry out their tasks, really teaching the comrades of the units, sections and districts, to overcome the Party's still lagging behind the Leftward-moving masses in the U.S.A.?

To answer these questions one has to analyze some of the basic political-organizational problems of the Party and see how they were dealt with in the magazine for the period under review.

Concentration: The central importance of concentration has been pointed out for a long time both by the C.I. and the C.C. of our Party. The Open Letter and resolutions of the C.I. and C.C. of the Party have time and again pointed out that without concentrating on the basic industries, the basic strata of the proletariat of the U.S.A.—miners, metal, steel, auto, marine—and without winning the majority of these workers to our side, there can be no real advance towards becoming a mass Communist Party. Still, at the Eighth Convention it was sharply pointed out that we have as yet made little progress on this point.

The January and February numbers do not deal with the problem at all. In the March issue, Comrade Peters deals with concentration in connection with the problem of dividing various districts and sections, giving each a smaller territory so as to enable them to cover it better. In the same issue there was an article discussing concentration in the Harvester Company in Chicago and how the Open Letter helped the work there. The April issue contains an article on experiences of railroad concentration in Chicago.

The articles that appeared in the various numbers, very useful articles, giving a world of experience in the field of concentration, were not accompanied with definite *line of the Party Organizer,* in the sense of analyzing and drawing lessons from these experiences, helping the comrades overcome the hardships they found in the work.

The important thing here is that the *Party Organizer itself says nothing* in comment on these experences: what they mean to the work of concentration; how we must deal with such problems and obstacles, how to overcome these shortcomings, etc. The *Party Organizer* should not pass up such glaring examples as quoted above without comment,

without organizing a campaign against such methods of concentration. Thus the main tasks of the *Party Organizer* in directing the comrades in the work, in providing the basis for overcoming the hardships, making use of the experiences in one unit, of a number of units, to help all others, are not being accomplished to a sufficient degree.

WORK IN THE FACTORIES

Work in the factories was discussed in practically every issue in the period under review, mainly in letters of comrades, articles from the field, relating experiences from various shop units and street units. The printing of these letters is very good. But the *Party Organizer* must comment, elaborate, explain, estimate and generalize the experiences contained in the letters. The main problems that Comrade Williamson in his org. report, Comrade Browder in his general report and various comrades in the discussion at the Eighth Convention brought out—problems of *methods of work*: the question of how to work under illegal conditions in the shops; how to raise demands of the workers and develop shop struggles, etc.,—all these problems, of the most vital importance to the life of the Party in rooting itself in the factories, mines and mills, are not to be found in the last six issues of the *Party Organizer*.

And still, the *Party Organizer* is *the* place where comrades must find this vital information. The *Party Organizer* must be *the handbook* for comrades to learn how to carry on shop work.

The Party made progress in shop work. From 64 shop nuclei in 1930 we have now 338. The precentage of Party membership in shop nuclei was increased from four per cent at the time of the Extraordinary Conference to nine per cent at the time of the Eighth Party Convention. But the Convention has pointed out very sharply that while the *stability* of the street units, sections and districts (as far as work, leadership, etc., are concerned) is now much better than heretofore, *this is not yet the case with the shop units*. On all these points the *Party Organizer* has to pay much more attention, give much more leadership than it has done in the past months.

SHOP PAPERS

That shop paper work is not yet considered part and parcel of shop work is a known fact. That the voice of the Party in the shop, the shop paper, is proportionally as essential to the life and work of the Party in a given workplace as the voice of the Party, the Party press, to the life and work of the Party in the entire country, is not yet a known fact to the majority of the Party members in the factory nuclei and the Party as a whole. The fact that out of a total number of 338 shop nuclei we have only 47 shop papers, and these also not coming out regularly and well prepared, speaks for itself. The *Party Organizer*, during the period, had a number of articles dealing with the problem. In one of these articles it correctly states:

> "We can truthfully say that to the extent that we systematically issue and circulate our shop papers, shall we be carrying out the Open Letter and conquering a firm base for the Party among the decisive strata of the workers."

There are also some articles in various numbers on some special problems in the shop papers: how the shop papers handle the struggle against war and fascism, some youth problems, etc. But this is still not sufficient. There should be a real *drive* for shop papers, not a special drive, but as part of the daily work of the Party, of shop work. Where is the Shop Paper Editor that used to appear as a separate bulletin and was later included as a section of the *Party Organizer*? The constant "driving along" of the Shop Paper Editor with its "monthly shop paper statistics", "political guide" and various "hints" in getting out shop papers used to be a great help in stimulating and helping the issuance of shop papers.

BUILDING THE PARTY—FLUCTUATION

Fluctuation of our membership is the most outstanding problem facing the growth of the Party. It is impossible to imagine the Party really growing into a mass Party unless *fluctuation* is brought to a minimum.

Between 1930 and 1934 we had 65 per cent turnover of the Party membership. Comrade Stachel states in the July *Party Organizer* that the turnover of the Party membership "for the year remains about 100 per cent"! Surely the Party has gained in membership. But this increase in membership is not fully satisfactory, precisely for the fact that thousands of workers have joined the Party even in the last several months and were lost.

Just a glance at statistics of the first five months in 1934.

In January, 1934, our Party registered a dues-paying membership of 26,727. In the months following (including January) our Party took in 11,907 new members. That means that we should now have 38,634 members. The figures for May, 1934, are 22,564. (All these figures were given by Comrade Stachel in the July issue of the *Party Organizer*.) That means that only in five months we have lost 16,070 from the ranks of our Party! If you multiply these figures of lost members within the last five months with the last several years, you will see how strong our Party would have been if not for this curse called "Party fluctuation"!

Actually, up to the May-June issue, the after-Party Convention issue of the *Party Organizer*, there

is nothing on this point except in one article in the March issue, dealing with the New York Harlem Section. In the later issues—May-June, July and August—this question is dealt with, calling attention to the danger signal in connection with fluctuation.

Can we say that the *Party Organizer* in the last seven months has really dealt with this most menacing problem confronting us, really helped the Party, as it should, in solving this problem? Hardly. In order to help, it should have been necessary to point out the experiences of individual Party organizations, to give examples of good work, to criticize bad work, and to analyze the causes for fluctuation in individual organizations. For example, in the August (1934) issue, a comrade of District 3, Philadelphia, writes that in his district there was a turnover of 300 per cent! Certainly these facts were known to the Org. Dept. before this article had appeared in the *Party Organizer*. It was necessary that the Org. Dept. should make a special investigation of a section, nay, a unit, in this district that had the greatest share in the 300 per cent turnover, discuss with the comrades the reasons for this, work out concretely means to overcome this situation and constantly report every step in the *Party Organizer*, so that the comrades throughout the country could have learned from this experience to improve their own work. Thus, also, the *Party Organizer* would have constantly kept this burning question before the eyes of the Party membership and the Party organizations and concretely helped in its solution.

PROBLEMS OF INNER-PARTY LIFE

While circular letters have been done away with by the C.C. and Districts and replaced more by personal leadership, this is not yet the case regarding the sections and units. The units still receive circular letters from the sections. (See org. material, Eighth Convention.) This certainly is still a defect in the leadership given by the sections to the units, still a lack of personal leadership. Even where personal contact exists, its weakest points are that the instructions are still not sufficiently concrete, are not sufficiently explained to the membership on just how to carry out the given directive. Comrade Williamson in his org. report to the Eighth Convention stated the following regarding district and section leadership:

> "The main weaknesses here remain that there is too much instructing which is unaccompanied by how to carry out these instructions, and how to overcome the weaknesses and difficulties."

The question of developing forces, developing the initiative of the district and section committees was sharply raised at the Convention. In his report Comrade Williamson said, "We must raise sharply the relation of the District Committees and the District Bureaus". He stated that this problem is also true for the sections. To illustrate what he meant, he brought the following classical example of the Cleveland District prior to its last District Convention: The District Committee consisted of 20 members. The District Bureau of 14—12 *full-time functionaries*. Only four were from outside the central city (Cleveland) and *only one shop worker*. The District Bureau took on all the functions of the District Committee. The C.C. was called together once in a while as a mass meeting, not as a working body, to discuss general problems, but has not led the day-to-day work of the district. With variations, this is true of many districts of the Party. The *Party Organizer* should have devoted much of its attention within the last six months to these problems, reflecting the efforts of the Org. Dept. and the C.C. to change this state of affairs. *However, nothing of this sort of material is to be found in the Party Organizer for the period under review.*

Fractions: The Convention org. material points out that the nature and tasks of the fractions, their relationship to the trade unions, etc., are not yet clear. The fractions do not function properly. Except for an article in the January issue by Comrade Brown, where he discusses some problems of fractions in the mass organizations and makes some very good proposals, and another article in the August issue dealing with the fractions in a New York section, giving some good experience, nothing else is to be found in the seven months' *Party Organizers* on this score.

The basic problems raised by the Convention, that of clearing up the nature and tasks of the fractions, their relations to the trade unions, actual guidance to the trade union fractions,—this is also absent from the *Party Organizer* for the period under review.

* * *

There are a number of other highly important problems such as trade union work, opposition work in the A. F. of L.—the central task of the Party on the trade union field—experiences in strike struggles, the united front, etc., that we should analyze and see how the *Party Organizer* dealt with during these last six months. But space here does not permit the more lengthy discussions that these problems call for and deserve. The *Party Organizer* contains a great number of resolutions and articles dealing with strike struggles and work in the A. F. of L., but also here, these experiences are not sufficiently analyzed, lessons are not sufficiently drawn, to serve as directives to the comrades in the field for carrying on this work. A real exception in this respect, and an excellent example of how the *Party Organizer* should analyze experiences and struggles, is to be

found in the August issue—a short editorial on the San Francisco general strike.

The united front policy and its application received *one* article in the August issue, while in the March and July issues it was referred to in other articles. The problem of the S.P., notwithstanding the fact that the period under review takes in the last S.P. National Convention and the various letters of the Party sent to the S.P., proposing united front actions, is not mentioned in any of the issues. Still the *Party Organizer* in this period should have reflected the struggles of the Party for the united front. The experiences of the various Party organizations should have been analyzed, lessons drawn for the furthering of the struggle for united front actions. The experiences should have served as a means of teaching the comrades how to apply the united front tactics in the day-to-day struggles of the masses.

* * *

It is clear that the *Party Organizer* has given a world of experience of the comrades in the field on the most basic activities of the Party. In these articles were reflected the most vital problems and obstacles confronting the comrades in the work. The overcoming of the shortcomings already mentioned will help the comrades to digest the material contained, and, on the basis of these experiences, teach the comrades in the field how to improve their work, how to overcome these obstacles that hinder the work of the Party.

As to proposals for the improvement of the magazine. We have tried to make these proposals in the body of the article when we dealt with each particular point. But let us enumerate a few of these proposals in closing.

1. In printing various articles relating experiences of comrades in the field the *Party Organizer* must analyze these experiences, draw the necessary lessons, direct the entire contents of the magazine towards its becoming a real guide and mobilizer in carrying out the political-organizational problems of the Party.

2. It must always single out the central tasks of the Party, the main task at a given moment, and mobilize the Party organizations for their fulfilment.

3. The *Party Organizer* must pay much more attention to the inner organizational problems of the units, sections and districts: the problem of collective leadership, proper functioning of the apparatus, building of the Party, etc.

4. Much more and special attention to work in the trade unions, particularly in our work in the A. F. of L. Bring greater clarity on the nature and tasks of the fractions, especially those in the trade unions, and upon the basis of the experiences gained in the work in the A. F. of L. teach the comrades how to improve this work further.

5. Stimulate the carrying out of control tasks by running reports and statistics of them in the columns of the *Party Organizer*. (So far for the whole seven months, there is only one account of the fulfilment of control tasks, of the Cleveland District—July issue.) Perhaps it would not be a bad thing to establish a Red Board for units, sections and districts fulfilling their control tasks.

6. It would also be well to have a column in the *Party Organizer* where comrades could give their criticism of the magazine—what they like and what they do not like about it, with proposals for its improvement.

The existence and regular appearance of the *Party Organizer*, the great participation of many of the comrades in the field in the magazine, is a great achievement for the C.P.U.S.A. The overcoming of the above-mentioned shortcomings are problems of organization. With greater attention to these problems, with sufficient concentration on overcoming these shortcomings, the *Party Organizer* can and will become the greatest help to the comrades in the field for carrying out the many tasks with which the Party is confronted.

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NOTE

The article by Comrade O. Piatnitsky, "Problems of the International Trade Union Movement," published in No. 22 of The Communist International, *was erroneously listed as a discussion article for the forthcoming Seventh World Congress. This article is not a discussion article and should have been listed under the heading, "Towards the Seventh Congress of the C.I.".*

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